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THE LIFE  
OF  
NAPOLEON BUONAPARTE,  
BY  
W. HAZLITT.

VOL. III.



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WILLIAM HAZLITT.

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CHAPTER XXXIV.

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE EMPIRE.

Establishment of the French empire ; origin of the design ; the First Consul becomes Emperor by a nearly unanimous vote of the people ; his inauguration ; sets out for Boulogne ; joins the empress at Belgium, and visits Mentz ; returns to Paris ; preparations for the coronation ; arrival of the Pope to perform the ceremony ; his reception by Napoleon ; the coronation ; Lombardy erected into a kingdom, with Buonaparte for its emperor ; is crowned at Milan ; Napoleon returns through Italy by Genoa, to his capital ; his private habits and mode of life.

THERE is something in the form of monarchy that seems vastly adapted to the constitution and weaknesses of human nature. It as it were puts a stop by a specific barrier to the tormenting strife and restless importunity of the passions in individuals, and at the same time happily discharges the understanding of all the labour and turmoil of its concern for the public good. The crown, the emblem of precedence and sovereignty, for which all are contending, is snatched from the reach of all to be placed on the brow of a baby yet unborn ; the troublesome differences of right and wrong, which produce such infinite agitation of opinion and convulse the bosom of states, are set at rest by the maxim that the king can do no wrong ; and a power whose origin is lost in the distance of time and that acts upon no other warrant than its own will, seems in a manner self-

existent, and baffles alike resistance or censure. Once substitute the lineal distinctions of legitimacy and illegitimacy for those of right and wrong, and the world, instead of being turned upside down, runs on in a smooth and invariable course. That a thing *is*, is much easier to determine than whether *it is good or bad*; and the first question is the only one at stake in a monarchy; it is the last that is always pending in commonwealths, that makes them so difficult of establishment and so soon unhinges them. *Le Roi le veut* stops all mouths; and if we only admit that whatever *is*, is right, there is nothing more to be done, neither good nor harm; though there may be a great deal of the latter to be suffered. A name, a prejudice, a custom are self-evident things: the inquiry after truth and good is "long, obscure, and infinite." If a ray of light breaks in upon it, it does not penetrate the mass of ignorance and folly; or if the flame of liberty is kindled it is extinguished by the sword. A hundred freemen only differ with and defeat one another; ninety-nine slaves follow one tyrant, and act all together. Whatever is great and good is seated on a steep ascent; the base and selfish is placed on an inclined plane below. If in this disadvantage of the ground on which the cause of improvement and emancipation rests, we can keep it suspended halfway down, or from being precipitated with scorn and loud imprecations into the abyss, it is doing something.

Let any one look at those four men in the last chapter, the first of them one of the earliest defenders and earliest betrayers of the Republic; the second who had formerly denounced him now courted by him to league with a third, an assassin, outlaw, and desperado in the royal cause, whose ignorance and incapacity to conceive of any thing else made him true to his first engagements, against a fourth who excited the envy and resentment of the two first for having outstripped them in the career of popularity and power, and was obnoxious to the hatred and vengeance of the third for being a main obstacle to the return of the

Bourbons. And then I would ask, in this state of things, when reason, patriotism was divided against itself and torn in a thousand pieces, when the blindfold and furious bigot was alone faithful, and when the great principle of the Revolution found its firmest support and most unflinching ally in personal aggrandisement and soaring ambition, that preferred grasping at the supreme authority itself sooner than let it revert into the old, impure channels: I would ask, in this state of things, what better could be hoped by the most sanguine than to gain time, to hurl back and set at defiance to the uttermost that abomination of abominations, the evils of an endless struggle with which had almost made the thing itself seem endurable, and to make a drawn battle for the present, a compromise between the establishment of a great principle in theory, and the imperfect adherence to it in practice? Those who are most sincerely and unalterably attached to the rule will not be most apt to take umbrage at the departure from it, for still it was in the nature of an exception, and not the admission of the opposite doctrine. "Entire affection scorneth nicer hands." Mr. Landor, whom I conceive to be capable of all the fervour and steadiness of the love of liberty and hatred of tyranny, says, that "the two worst crimes of the Revolution were the death of Malesherbes and the coronation of Buonaparte." I do not see that point with his eyes. I have nowhere in any thing I may have written declared myself to be a Republican; nor should I think it worth while to be a martyr and a confessor to any form or mode of government. But what I have staked health and wealth, name and fame upon, and am ready to do so again and to the last gasp, is this, that there is a power in the people to change its government and its governors. That is, I am a Revolutionist: for otherwise, I must allow that mankind are but a herd of slaves, the property of thrones, that no tyranny or insult can lawfully goad them to a resistance to a particular family, or impair

in any possible degree the sacred and inalienable right of insolent, unmitigated control over them ;— and it is not in the power of mortal man to bring me to that acknowledgment on the part of myself and my fellows. This is the only remedy mankind have against oppression : if this is not enough, yet I am contented with it. While this right remains in force, not written indeed in the preambles of acts of parliament, but engraved in a nation's history, proved in the heraldry of its kings, a country may call itself free. The French changed from a monarchy to a republic, and from a republic to the empire, but they changed in either case ; nor was the breach made in the doctrine of passive obedience and hereditary right any more healed or soldered up by this means, than if at the time of the beheading of Louis XVI. they had sent to a needy German Elector, or to the Prince of Orange to succeed him with the same title and with certain conditions of their own. If the new dynasty ever became a race of *rois faineans*, existing only for themselves, or to injure and molest the people, they would have the highest example and authority to expel and overturn them. The change of the form of government might be considered as an advance towards an accommodation with the old aristocracies ; but they did not receive it so either at first or at last. On the contrary, if the reign of terror excited their fears and horror, the establishment of the Empire under Buonaparte seemed even a greater affront and encroachment on their pride and privileges ; and so far from being an atonement for the ravages of Jacobinism, was the seal and consummation of them. The fellowship between him and the allies was that between the panther and the wolf. If they did not consider him as the legitimate successor of Louis XVI. and as having stopped up the volcano of the French Revolution, neither can I : if they still looked upon him as one of the people raised by their choice, or who had usurped that power, so must I ; for it was only by

their triumph over him that that image of the “divine and human majesty” joined together and hallowed by prejudice and superstition could be restored, of which no efforts of his could produce more than a splendid and mortifying counterfeit—if mortifying to republican stoicism, how much more so to royal fortitude! The balance of the account, if not quite on our side, was not quite and for ever closed against us.

The repeated attempts made against the life of the First Consul gave a handle for following up the design, which had been for some time agitated, of raising him to the imperial throne and making the dignity hereditary in his family. Not that indeed this would secure him from personal danger, though it is true that “there’s a divinity doth hedge a king;” but it lessened the temptation to the enterprise and allayed a part of the public disquietude by providing a successor. All or the greater part were satisfied (either from reason, indolence, or the fear of worse) with what had been gained by the Revolution; and did not wish to see it launch out again from the port in which it had taken shelter to seek the perils of new storms and quicksands. If prudence had some share in this measure, there can be little doubt that vanity and cowardice had theirs also—or that there was a lurking desire to conform to the Gothic dialect of civilized Europe in forms of speech and titles, and to adorn the steel arm of the Republic with embroidered drapery and gold-tissue. The imitation, though probably not without its effect,\* would look more like a burlesque to those whom it was intended to please, and could hardly flatter the just pride of those by whom it was undertaken. The old Republican party made some stand: the Emigrants showed great zeal for it, partly real, partly affected. Fouché canvassed the senate and the men of the Revolution, and was soon placed in consequence at the head of the police;

\* For instance, would the Emperor of Austria have married his daughter to Buonaparte if he had been only First Consul?

which was restored, as it was thought that fresh intrigues might break out on the occasion. The army gave the first impulse, as was but natural ; to them the change of style from *Imperator* to *Emperor* was but slight. All ranks and classes followed when the example was once set : the most obscure hamlets joined in the addresses ; the First Consul received wagon-loads of them. A register for the reception of votes for or against the question was opened in every parish in France ; from Antwerp to Perpignan, from Brest to Mont Cenis. The *procès-verbal* of all these votes was laid up in the archives of the senate, who went in a body from Paris to St. Cloud to present it to the First Consul. The second Consul, Cambacéres, read a speech, concluding with a summary of the number of votes ; whereupon he in a loud voice proclaimed Napoleon Buonaparte Emperor of the French. The senators, placed in a line facing him, vied with each other in repeating *Vive l'Empereur !* and returned with all the outward signs of joy to Paris, where people were already writing epitaphs on the Republic.\* Happy they whom epitaphs on the dead console for the loss of them ! This was the time, if ever, when they ought to have opposed him, and prescribed limits to his power and ambition, and not when he returned weather-beaten and winter-flawed from Russia. But it was more in character for these persons to cringe when spirit was wanted, and to show it when it was fatal to him and to themselves.

Thus then the First Consul became Emperor by a majority of two millions some hundred thousand votes to a few hundreds. The number of votes is complained of by some persons as too small. Probably they may think that if the same number had been against the measure instead of being for it, this would have conferred a right as being in opposition to and in contempt of the choice of the people. What other candidate

\* M. Cambacéres was said to be the first "*qui cira (Sîr) les bottes de Buonaparte*"—greased his boots, or Sired him.

was there that would have got a hundred? What other competitor could indeed have come forward on the score of merit? *Detur optimo.* Birth there was not: but birth supersedes both choice and merit. The day after the inauguration, Buonaparte received the constituted bodies, the learned corporations, &c. The only strife was who should bow the knee the lowest to the new-risen sun. The troops while taking the oath rent the air with shouts of enthusiasm. The succeeding days witnessed the nomination of the new dignitaries, marshals, and all the usual appendages of a throne, as well with reference to the military appointments as to the high offices of the crown. On the 14th of July, the first distribution of the crosses of the Legion of Honour took place; and Napoleon set out for Boulogne to review the troops stationed in the neighbourhood and distribute the decorations of the Legion of Honour among them, which thenceforth were substituted for weapons of honour, which had been previously awarded ever since the first war in Italy.

The Emperor arrogated nothing to himself in consequence of the change in his situation. He had assumed the mock-majesty of kings, and had taken his station among the lords of the earth; but he was still himself, and his throne still stood afar off in the field of battle. He appeared little more conscious of his regal style and title, than if he had put on a masquerade-dress the evening before, of which if he was not ashamed (as it was a thing of custom) he had no reason to be proud; and he applied himself to his different avocations with the same zeal and activity as if nothing extraordinary had happened. He thought much less, it was evident, of all these new honours than of the prosecution of his operations at Boulogne, on which he laboured incessantly. The remoteness or doubtfulness of success did not relax his efforts, having once determined on the attempt, all the intermediate exertions between the will and its accomplish-

ment with him went for nothing, any more than so much holiday recreation. Something more of the *vis inertiae* would have allayed this inordinate importunity of voluntary power, and led to greater security and repose.

From Boulogne the Emperor went a second time to Belgium, where the Empress joined him ; they occupied the palace of Lacken near Brussels, which had formerly belonged to the Archduke Charles. He this time extended his journey to the Rhine ; and from Mentz he dispatched General Caffarelli to Rome to arrange the visit of the Pope to Paris. It was from Mentz likewise he sent orders for the departure of the Toulon and Rochefort squadrons as a first step towards carrying into effect the invasion of England ; but owing to unforeseen circumstances, it was winter before they sailed.

Buonaparte returned from his tour at the end of October ; his attention was engaged during the month of November with the preparations for the coronation, the Pope having set out from Rome for the purpose of performing the ceremony. The court was ordered to Fontainebleau to receive him, the palace there which had fallen into ruins having been repaired and newly fitted up by Napoleon. He went to meet the Pope at Nemours ; and to avoid formality, the pretext of a hunting party was made use of, the Emperor coming on horseback and in a hunting-dress, with his retinue, to the top of the hill, where the meeting took place. The Pope's carriage drawing up, he got out at the left door in his white costume ; the ground was dirty, and he did not like to tread upon it with his white silk shoes, but was at last obliged to do so. Napoleon alighted from his horse to receive him. They embraced. The Emperor's carriage had been driven up and advanced a few paces, as if by accident ; but men were posted to hold the two doors open, and at the moment of getting in, the Emperor took the right door, and an officer of the court handed the

Pope to the left, so that they entered the carriage by the two doors at the same moment. The Emperor naturally seated himself on the right ; and this first step decided without negotiation upon the etiquette to be observed during the whole time of the Pope's stay at Paris. This interview and Buonaparte's behaviour was the very highest act and *acme* of audacity. It is comparable to nothing but the meeting of Priam and Achilles ; or a joining of *hands* between the youth and the old age of the world. If Pope Pius VII. represented the decay of ancient superstition, Buonaparte represented the high and palmy state of modern opinion ; yet not insulting over but propping the fall of the first. There were concessions on both sides, from the oldest power on earth to the newest, which in its turn asserted precedence for the strongest. In point of birth there was no difference, for theocracy stoops to the dregs of earth, as democracy springs from it ; but the Pope bowed his head from the ruins of the longest-established authority in Christendom, Buonaparte had himself raised the platform of personal elevation on which he stood to meet him. To us the condescension may seem all on one side, the presumption on the other ; but history is a long and gradual ascent, where great actions and characters in time leave borrowed pomp behind and at an immeasurable distance below them ! After resting at Fontainebleau, the Emperor returned to Paris ; the Pope, who set out first and was received with sovereign honours on the road, was escorted to the Tuilleries and was treated the whole time of his residence there as if at home. The novelty of his situation and appearance at Paris excited general interest and curiosity ; and his deportment, besides its flowing from the natural mildness of his character, was marked by that fine *tact* and sense of propriety which the air of the ancient mistress of the world is known to inspire. Manners have there half maintained the empire which opinion had lost. The Pope was flattered by his re-

ception and the sentiments of respect and good-will his presence seemed everywhere to create, and gave very gracious audiences to the religious corporations which were presented to him, and which were at this time but few in number. To meet this imposing display of pomp and ceremony, Buonaparte was in a manner obliged to oppose a host of ecclesiastics, of old and new nobility, and to draw the lines of form and etiquette closer round him, so as to make the access of old friends and opinions less easy. This effect of the new forms and ceremonies was at least complained of ; but if they thus early kept out his friends, they did not in the end keep out his enemies.

The day fixed for the coronation arrived. It was the 2nd of December, 1804. Notwithstanding the unfavourableness of the weather, the assemblage of the deputations from all the departments, from all the chief towns, and all the regiments of the army, joined to all the public functionaries of France, to all the generals, and to the whole population of the capital, presented a fine and imposing sight. The interior of the church of Nôtre-Dame had been magnificently embellished ; galleries and pews erected for the occasion were thronged with a prodigious concourse of spectators. The imperial throne was placed at one end of the nave, on a very elevated platform ; that of the Pope was in the choir, beside the high altar. I am not averse to be thus particular in preserving “the memory of what has been, and never more will be.” If these were false triumphs and false pomps of that cause which was ever next my heart (since a little child I knelt and lifted up my hands in prayer for it), they were better than the total ruin and grinning infamy that afterwards befel it. The Pope (who was made the antic of the day) set out from the Tuilleries, preceded by his chamberlain on an ass (which there was some difficulty in procuring at the moment), and who kept his countenance with an admirable gravity through the crowds of ob-

servers that lined the streets. The Pope arriving at the archiepiscopal palace, repaired to the choir of the cathedral by a private entrance.

The Emperor set out with the Empress by the Carrousel. In getting into the carriage, which was open all round and without panels, they at first seated themselves with their backs to the horses—a mistake which, though instantly rectified, was remarked as ominous; and it had all the ominousness which hangs over new power or custom. The procession passed along the Rue St. Honoré to that of the Lombards, then to the Pont au Change, the Palace of Justice, the court of Nôtre-Dame, and the entrance to the archiepiscopal palace. Here rooms were prepared for the whole of the attendants, some of whom appeared dressed in their civil costumes, others in full uniform. On the outside of the church had been erected a long wooden gallery from the archbishop's palace to the entrance of the church. By this gallery came the Emperor's retinue, which presented a truly magnificent sight. They had taunted us with our simplicity and homeliness; well, then, here was the answer to it. The procession was led by the already numerous body of courtiers; next came the marshals of the empire, wearing their badges of honour; then the dignitaries and high officers of the crown; and lastly, the Emperor in a gorgeous state-dress. At the moment of his entering the cathedral, there was a simultaneous shout, which resembled one vast explosion, of *Vive l'Empereur*. The immense quantity of figures to be seen on each side of so vast an edifice formed a tapestry of the most striking kind. The procession passed along the middle of the nave, and arrived at the choir facing the high altar. This part of the spectacle was not the least imposing. The galleries round the choir were filled with the handsomest women which France could boast, and most of whom surpassed in the lustre of their beauty that of the rich jewels with which they were adorned.

His holiness then went to meet the Emperor at a desk, which had been placed in the middle of the choir ; there was another on one side for the Empress. After saying a short prayer there, they returned, and seated themselves on the throne at the end of the church facing the choir : there they heard mass, which was said by the Pope. They went to make the offering, and came back ; they then descended from the platform of the throne, and walked in procession to receive the holy unction. The Emperor and Empress, on reaching the choir, replaced themselves at their desks, where the Pope performed the ceremony. He presented the crown to the Emperor, who received it, put it himself upon his own head, took it off, placed it on that of the Empress, removed it again, and laid it on the cushion where it was at first. A smaller crown was immediately put upon the head of the Empress, who being surrounded by her ladies, everything was done so quickly that nobody was aware of the substitution that had taken place. The procession moved back to the platform. There the Emperor heard *T'e Deum* : the Pope himself went thither at the conclusion of the service, as if to say, *Ite, missa est !* The Testament was presented to the Emperor, who took off his glove, and pronounced the oath with his hand upon the sacred book. He went back to the episcopal palace the same way that he had come, and entered his carriage. The ceremony was long, the day cold and wet ; the Emperor seemed impatient and uneasy a great part of the time ; and it was dusk before the cavalcade reached the Tuilleries, whither it returned by the Rue St. Martin, the Boulevards, the Place de la Concorde, and the Pont-Tournant. The distribution of the eagles took place some days afterwards. Though the weather was still unfavourable, the throng was prodigious, and the enthusiasm at its height ; the citizens as well as the soldiers bursting into long and repeated acclamations, as those warlike bands received from the hands of their re-

nowned leader (not less a soldier for being a king) the pledges of many a well-fought field.

The Cisalpine Republic at the same time underwent a change which was easily managed. The Emperor was surrounded by men, who spared him the trouble of expressing the same wish twice, though many of them afterwards pretended that they had sturdily disputed every word and syllable of it, opposing a shadow of resistance to fallen power instead of the substance to the abuse of it, and finding no medium between factious divisions and servile adulation. Lombardy was erected into a kingdom, and the Emperor put the Iron Crown of Charlemagne upon his head. Those who look upon this as a violent usurpation seem wilfully to forget all the intermediate steps which led to it, as though it were an effect without a cause. A crown resting on merit alone appears ridiculous, because there is no necessary connexion between the two things; a crown worn without any merit in the wearer seems natural and in order, because no reason is even pretended to be assigned for it. If such things are to be at all, who so worthy of the distinction as those who achieve them as tokens of what they have done and are to do—if they are not to be at all, I am still better satisfied. The Pope, who had done all that was required of him, expected something in return: he asked for the restoration of Avignon in France, of Bologna and Ferrara in Italy, to the Holy See. The Emperor turned a deaf ear; and on the Pope's insisting, gave a flat refusal. This was the beginning of a great deal of petty disagreement and annoyance that was creditable to neither party. His Holiness went away not in the best humour, though Buonaparte made him magnificent presents of everything but what he wanted. They bad farewell to each other, the Emperor leaving the Pope at Paris to set out for Italy, by way of Troyes and Burgundy, which he wished to visit. They met again at Turin, whence the Pope

proceeded by way of Casal to Rome, and the Emperor through Asti and Alexandria to be crowned at Milan. He stopped at Alexandria (the 14th of June, 1805) to review the troops on the anniversary of the battle of Marengo. He on that day put on the same coat and laced hat he had worn on the field of battle. This dress, which was old and moth-eaten, was pierced in more than one place by the Austrian bullets. It was on the same occasion that he had a monument erected on the top of Mont St. Bernard to perpetuate the memory of that victory; and that the remains of Desaix, which were discovered with some difficulty in the same vault and in the same state in which they had been left five years before, were deposited with funeral pomp in the sacristy of the convent.

A deputation of the Cisalpine Republic with Melzi (afterwards Duke of Lodi) at its head, had come to Paris to offer Buonaparte the Iron Crown of Italy,\* and they had returned in time to welcome him to Milan. The enthusiasm in the city was excessive; nor is it to be wondered at after the vicissitudes of surprise and disappointment, of hope and fear, of defeat and victory, to which they had so often been subjected and were still doomed to be so, the sport of fortune, not masters of their own fate! Buonaparte was a favourite with the Italians; he was theirs by birthright, by his knowledge of their language, by his

\* This iron crown, as it is called, is a plain circlet of gold covering a ring of iron, said to be composed of the nails of the Cross. The imperial crown is in the form of a garland of leaves, resembling those on the antique busts of the Caesars. Its appearance is light and elegant.

The ceremony of this new consecration took place in the cathedral of Milan, next to St. Peter's the vastest interior of Italy. Upon this occasion, taking the iron crown from the hands of the Archbishop of Milan, Napoleon placed it upon his own head, calling aloud, "Dieu me l'a donnée; gare à qui la touche," which remarkable expression afterwards became the legend of the Order of the Iron Crown, founded by the Emperor in commemoration of this event.—*Bourrienne.*

intimate acquaintance with all the local circumstances of their history and institutions, no less than by the benefits he had conferred upon them and that brilliant career which had commenced upon their soil ! Of the many great works he caused to be performed amongst them, the completing of the cathedral of Milan was not the least flattering to their pride. The ceremony of the coronation took place in this vast building. A detachment of the guard of honour at Milan went the day before to fetch the Iron Crown of the ancient kings of Lombardy, which was carefully preserved at Monza ; it became once more that of the kingdom of Italy. On this occasion, the Emperor instituted the Order of the Iron Crown, and after the ceremony of the coronation went in state to the senate, where he invested Prince Eugene Beauharnois with the vice-royalty of Italy.

While at Milan, the French read the accounts in the newspapers, published from the intercepted correspondence of Sir Arthur Wellesley, of the immense strides made by the English power in India, and could not help being struck with the different measures of moderation or aggrandizement, which we seemed to have for ourselves and for our neighbours ! This happened just at the time when the annexation of Genoa to the French Empire gave a severe shock to the political prudery of the English cabinet. Genoa however, as circumstances stood, was rather a burden than an acquisition to France, so as to cause an increase in the public expenditure. Genoa had long possessed nothing but marble palaces, the relics of its former grandeur. During all this accession of honours and these multiplied transactions, the Emperor found time to transmit the most minute directions respecting the equipment and embarking of the still meditated naval expedition through one of his confidential agents at Boulogne. So little did the weight of two crowns press upon his brain or make it giddy ! At Brescia he learned the return of Missiessy's squadron

two months before its time, bringing the English fleets with it, which caused him a degree of chagrin, which he strove in vain to hide. Afterwards, the delay and incapacity of Villeneuve disconcerted the whole project, as has been already hinted. Buonaparte, after passing through Brescia, Verona, Mantua, and the other cities of Italy, to take possession of Genoa, returned to Paris by way of Fontainebleau towards the end of June, and hastened to the coast only to witness the disappointment of a series of calculations, which almost unavoidably fell to pieces from the number of links of which it was composed. Everything was so far ready at the time that the signal to embark was looked for every hour, but it never came. Events of a different complexion opened a new career for his love of enterprise and his ambition, if the repelling the unprovoked and unexpected aggressions of others is by any courtesy of speech to be called so.

Before proceeding to take up that part of the subject, it will not be amiss to give a few particulars of Napoleon's private habits and mode of life at this period of his history.

Every morning at nine o'clock regularly (when he was at home) the Emperor came out of the interior of his apartments, dressed for the day. The officers of the household were the first admitted. Napoleon gave them his orders for the day. Immediately after, the *grand entrées* were introduced, consisting of persons of the highest rank, who were entitled to this privilege either by their functions or by special favour. This privilege was at that time considered as the highest possible distinction. Napoleon addressed each person in turn, and listened good-naturedly to all that was said to him. The round being made, he bowed and every one withdrew. Sometimes those who had any particular request to make remained alone with him a few moments after the others. At half an hour after nine, the breakfast was served.

The prefect of the palace\* went to apprise him of it and to go before him into the saloon where he was to breakfast, and there waited on him alone, assisted by the first *maitre-d'hôtel*, who performed all the details of the duty. Napoleon breakfasted on a small mahogany stand covered with a napkin. The prefect of the palace was in attendance, his hat under his arm, standing near the little table. Temperate as ever man was, the breakfast of the Emperor often lasted not more than eight or ten minutes. But when he felt an inclination to close the doors, as he said sometimes laughing, the breakfast lasted long enough, and then nothing could surpass the easy gaiety and grace of his conversation. His expressions were rapid, pointed, and picturesque. Those who had the good fortune to be about his person found these the most agreeable hours of their lives. He often received during breakfast-time a few individuals in whose society he had the greatest pleasure, among whom might be mentioned particularly the names of Monge, Bertholet, Costaz, Denon, Corvisart his physician, and the celebrated David, Gerard, Isabey, Talma, and others. The satisfaction of all parties was mutual and complete. Endowed with abundant resources, a superior understanding, and extraordinary quickness, it was in moments of the most unguarded confidence and intimacy that Napoleon, by the common consent of all who knew him, shone the most.

Having returned to his cabinet, Napoleon applied himself to business, and received the ministers and directors-general, who attended with their portfolios; these different occupations lasted till six in the evening, and were never broken in upon, except on the days of the councils of the ministers or the councils of state. The dinner was regularly served up at six o'clock. At the Tuilleries or at St. Cloud, their

\* At that time M. de Bausset, who gives the above account.

Majesties dined alone, except on Sundays, when the whole of the imperial family were admitted to the banquet: the Emperor, the Empress, and the Emperor's mother were seated in elbow-chairs, the rest had common chairs. The dinner consisted but of one course, prolonged by the dessert; the simplest dishes were those which Napoleon preferred. The only wine he drank was Chambertin, and he seldom drank it pure. The attendants were the pages, the *maîtres-d'hôtel*, and other servants out of livery. The dinner lasted ordinarily from a quarter of an hour to twenty minutes. Buonaparte never tasted spirits or *liqueurs*. He usually took two cups of coffee pure, one in the morning after breakfast, and the other directly after dinner. All that has been said of his abuse of this beverage was at that time false and ridiculous.

Having gone back to the drawing-room, a page presented to the Emperor a silver-gilt waiter on which were a cup and a sugar-basin. The principal servant poured out the coffee; the Empress then took the cup from the Emperor; the page and the head servant withdrew, the prefect of the palace still remaining till the Empress had poured the coffee into the saucer and handed it to Napoleon. It happened so often that this prince forgot to take it at the proper time, that the Empress Josephine and after her the Empress Marie-Louise had hit upon so complaisant a mode of remedying this slight inconvenience. Shortly after, the Emperor returned into his cabinet to resume his labours, for rarely (as he observed) *he put off till to-morrow what he could do to-day*. The Empress descended to her apartments by a private stair, which had a communication with both suites of rooms: on entering the drawing-room she there found the ladies of honour in attendance, some other privileged ladies, and the officers of her household: card-tables were set out for form's sake and to break the constraint of a circle. Napoleon sometimes came there through the Empress's apartments, and talked with as much simplicity as

freedom with the ladies of the court or the rest of the company, but in general he stayed only a short time. The officers on duty prepared to attend the evening *levée*, and to receive their orders for the next day. Such was the life habitually led by the Emperor at the Tuilleries. Its uniformity was interrupted only when there was a concert, a play, or by the chase. During his stay at St. Cloud, the manner of living was the same, with the exception of the time employed in fine weather, in the neighbourhood. The council of ministers was held every Wednesday ; the members were always invited to stay dinner. At Fontainebleau, Rambouillet or Compiègne, where Napoleon went to hunt, there was always a tent set up in the forest for breakfast, to which all the party was invited : the ladies followed the chase in their carriages. It was usual for eight or ten persons to be asked to dine. Napoleon's mode of life when he was with the army or on a journey of course varied according to the nature of the circumstances. The whole economy of the household was regulated with the exactest care by the Grand-Marshal Duroc (Duke of Frioul) under the superintendence of the Emperor himself. Nevertheless, we are not to suppose that there was an appearance of anything mean or niggardly. Napoleon's own tastes were simple and modest ; but he liked to see display and magnificence around him. His court was always brilliant and in the best taste. There was order and not waste.

It sometimes happened that Napoleon, pre-occupied with affairs of state, rose from breakfast or dinner for days together without a word having been said. But such occurrences, it is to be noted, were rare ; and even when his brow was serious and his lips silent, he still showed himself just, polite, and kind. Few persons (according to the best testimony) have in private possessed more equability of temper, and greater gentleness of manners. In political discussions indeed he did not willingly give ground ; but even

when his features were kindled into warmth and his expressions betrayed anger, he had often too much reason for it; and his indignation was more than once roused by ingratitude, which sprang up in the very height of his prosperity. Two instances may be given here to explain the difference of the tone of sentiment and etiquette in the new and the old court. M. Victor de Caraman (since the return of the Bourbons ambassador to the court of Vienna) had been arrested and put in prison in the time of the Consulate. His wife, encouraged by the Empress Josephine, whose extreme goodness was known to all France, had the boldness to make her way through the guard and mount on the steps of Napoleon's carriage to make an affecting appeal on behalf of her husband. She was listened to with attention and without any marks of impatience; but she did not obtain a favourable answer. In her hurry and distress, Madame de Caraman forgot her work-bag in the carriage, which was sent to her the next morning. On seeing it, she expected to find her husband's pardon in the work-bag. It is certain that in the days of romantic chivalry, or in a case less grave, this trait of gallantry might have suggested itself. Josephine declared that the Emperor was at first tempted to do so; but that he fancied the oversight had been voluntary and premeditated, and then he altered his mind, the statesman getting the better of the courtier. Some months afterwards, M. de Caraman was sent to reside at Ivrea, in Piedmont, under the eye of the police. Another illustration to the purpose is the circumstance that at a later period it was debated whether the Emperor should not dine in public as the princes of the house of Bourbon had formerly done; but this was negatived on the ground that the mere act of eating or drinking was one that concerned the individual alone; and though it was proper and of a piece to make a state-ceremony of this with regard to the former family, as all that they did was for their own sakes, and supposed by that alone to be worthy of the homage and wonder of the people,

yet in the new dynasty and upon modern principles it was a paralogism and an impertinence to obtrude the imperial family upon general notice, except as servants of the public, and in cases where the latter were primarily and ostensibly interested. This distinction, which was not merely in words, but acted upon at the time,\* is worth volumes as a comment on the character and uses of the two governments.

About the period at which we have arrived, the Abbé de Pradt, Cardinal Maury, the old academician La Harpe, and Chateaubriand, became a sort of appendages to the imperial court. Buonaparte's youngest brother, Jerome, was out of favour with him for having married an American lady, whom he refused to divorce in order to wed a continental princess. He afterwards yielded to his brother's solicitations. Madame de Staél (who had been banished to Geneva on account of her eloquence and intrigues) had just given new umbrage by her declamations against the Catholic religion, in her romance of "Delphine," and was not allowed to come to Paris to enjoy the success of it. Buonaparte is accused of having intermeddled too-much and too harshly with literature; but this was not till it had first meddled with him. He was fond of the theatre and often criticised the new pieces that came out (some of them of a political tendency) with the spirit of a statesman and the acuteness of a philosopher. Some persons have complained that he criticised the plan and style of a tragedy with the same confidence as if it had been the order of a battle. Surely he who had overcome and seemingly reconciled all parties (besides being a mere soldier) must be allowed to have possessed some knowledge of mankind, as he who had risen to the summit of power could not be altogether a stranger to aspiring and lofty sentiments. The Cid of modern Europe had earned a right to admire Corneille.

\* In the time of Marie Louise.

## CHAPTER XXXV.

## BATTLE OF AUSTERLITZ.

Coalition between England, Austria, and Russia, against France ; Napoleon draws his troops towards the Rhine ; Duroc despatched to Berlin ; is coolly received ; Napoleon departs for the Rhine ; is magnificently entertained at Wurtemburg ; fixes his head-quarters at Augsburg ; Mack shut up in Ulm, and invested ; Memmingen surrenders ; Prince Lichtenstein sent by Mack with a proposal to evacuate Ulm ; the Emperor's reply ; surrender of the fortress ; approach of the Russians ; the French army hastens through Bavaria to meet them ; Vienna entered by the French ; Napoleon arrives at Brunn ; is entreated to make peace ; receives intelligence of the battle of Trafalgar ; secret correspondence between the Emperors Napoleon and Alexander ; the former proposes an interview ; Prince Dolgorouki sent as deputy ; negotiation broken off ; Napoleon prepares to meet the Russians ; battle of Austerlitz.

TOWARDS the end of 1804 a memorial by one of the Austrian ministers roused Mr. Pitt from the state of inaction, in which he had so long remained supine but writhing under the sense of disappointment, to dream once more of coalitions which had hitherto been and were still to be formed during his lifetime only to be broken in pieces again. Marengo had staggered, Austerlitz gave the finishing blow to the schemes of pride and arrogance which filled up the whole measure of his perverted capacity. In the month of January 1805, he gave orders to the English legation to feel the pulse of the cabinet of St. Petersburg ; and on the 11th of April following, the treaty of concert was signed between England, Austria, and Russia, the two latter powers engaging to bring large armies into the field, while England was to furnish proportionable subsidies, in prosecution of the old nefarious object. Austria being the nearest was in the field first; and

commenced operations according to the legitimate privilege by an attack on Bavaria, a neutral power, in order to force her into the coalition ; but the tide of war soon turned, and Bavaria became the ally of France. In the June of the same year, Baron Vincent, the Austrian general, had gone out of his way to visit Napoleon at Verona, and had paid him sovereign honours by a salute of artillery. No declaration of war was issued, and Count Cobentzel, the Austrian plenipotentiary, still remained at Paris, so that everything concurred to lull Buonaparte into a false security ; but a spark was sufficient to rouse him into action, and the thunderbolt fell on those who thought to take him by surprise. He was so little apprehensive on the subject at first, that he would not for some time credit the rumours of a rupture with Austria, and sent Savary to Frankfort-on-the-Main to learn the truth of the matter, and to buy the best maps of the German Empire. Certain news, however, soon came of the advance of General Mack upon Munich, and of the arrival of the Russians in the Austrian territory. The Emperor now lost no time in raising the camp at Boulogne and in pushing the troops forward by the shortest routes to the banks of the Rhine, so that they might arrive there by the time that the Austrian army reached the Danube.

General Marmont received orders to make the best of his way from Holland. Bernadotte, who was in Hanover, had to cross part of the territory of Prussia, with whom France was at peace, and the sovereigns of the two countries had only lately exchanged honorary distinctions. At the same time, therefore, that the Emperor sent Bernadotte orders to march, he dispatched the Grand-Marshal Duroc to Berlin to apprise the king of Prussia of the critical situation in which he was placed by an attack without any previous declaration of war, to express his extreme regret at being obliged on the sudden to march his troops over certain portions of the Prussian dominions, and

to excuse himself on the ground of absolute necessity alone. Duroc's reception was not so cordial as it had been on a former occasion. The king said little, digested the affront inwardly as well as he could ; but long after his chagrin broke out on more than one occasion, when he could only resort to complaints, saying to Napoleon—"But why did you violate my neutrality of Anspach and Bareuth?" Baron Hardenberg spoke out more plainly in an official note on the subject, and there is little doubt that a war would have been the result, had it not been for the battle of Austerlitz. Prussia had just about the same time refused a passage through Polish Prussia to the Russian army, which was however consented to in consequence of the dissatisfaction of the court with Bernadotte's movement ; and the Emperor Alexander soon after came to Berlin, under pretence of a visit to his sister, the hereditary princess of Saxe Weimar, but in truth to draw Prussia over to the coalition.

Napoleon had already made all his calculations. The maps of England had disappeared, and given place to those of Germany, which was more debateable ground. Not sorry to exchange his bridge of boats for firm land, he made those about him follow the intended march of the troops, and explained his own designs in these words : "If the enemy," he said, "comes to meet me, I will destroy him before he has regained the Danube ; if he waits for me, I will surprise him between Augsburg and Ulm." And so it happened. He issued his last orders, and set out for Paris ; where having arrived, he repaired to the senate, informed them of the circumstances which led him to give a new destination to the troops and to call for fresh supplies, and proceeded next day to Strasburg. He reached that city while the French army was passing the Rhine at Kehl, Lauterburg, Spires, and Mannheim. He inspected the establishments of the fortress, and gave orders for the recon-

struction of the fort of Kehl. He had sent proposals to the Prince of Baden and to the Landgrave of Hesse-Darmstadt to join him: the first did so a little before the battle of Austerlitz; the other thought it best to wait till it was over. On the approach of the different troops to the foot of the mountains situated in the country of Wurtemberg, the duke had drawn up his little army near Ludwigsburg, his summer residence, and was preparing to make a formal resistance, when the Emperor's aide-de-camp appeared to request permission to pass. This mark of courtesy satisfied him; and the Emperor met a magnificent reception from the court of Wurtemberg, sleeping two nights at the palace of Ludwigsburg. It was on this occasion the Princess-Royal of England (who had been married to the Duke of Wurtemberg) sent home word to express her surprise at finding Buonaparte so polite and agreeable a person, and not at all the hideous caricature he had been held up in this country, lest John Bull should not be sufficiently terrified to answer the purposes of those who wanted to goad him to madness. During his stay here, hostilities commenced on the road from Stuttgart to Ulm between Marshal Ney's corps and the Austrians commanded by the Archduke Ferdinand and Field-Marshal Mack. Buonaparte directed Marshal Ney to debouch by the high Stuttgart road, making the enemy believe that the whole army were following him, when he suddenly wheeled round with the rapidity of lightning to Nordlingen, where shortly after arrived the corps of Davoust from Mannheim by the valley of the Necker, that of Soult from Spires by Heilbron, and lastly, that of Marshal Lannes who reached Donawert just in time to prevent an Austrian battalion, who had appeared on the right bank of the Danube, from destroying the bridge, and drove them back to the other side of the river.

The Emperor then caused the country to be scoured as far as the Lech; and placed himself in communi-

cation with General Marmont, who had passed the Danube at Neuburg, and also with the Bavarian army which was leaving Ingolstadt to join him. He ordered Augsburg to be occupied, which is forty miles in the rear of Ulm, where the Austrian headquarters were ; and sent Soult forward to blockade Memmingen, a small town to the south of Ulm, which was the only line of retreat the enemy had left, and into which they had thrown six thousand men. He then went and fixed his head-quarters at Augsburg to observe what course the Austrian army was about to take, round whom he had drawn a circle by the movement he had made in advance with his different corps, as completely as with the foot of a pair of compasses. From Augsburg he proceeded to Zummershausen, and caused Ulm to be hemmed in on all sides. It was difficult to understand why the Austrian generals had remained here so long (as if spell-bound) in the midst of all these complicated preparations to surround them, neither attempting to escape nor offering battle to the French. At length, as the Emperor approached by Guntzburg within sight of Ulm, he learned that a strong detachment under the Archduke Ferdinand had escaped from the place, and was making its way into the mountains of Bohemia in spite of the attempt of one of Marshal Ney's divisions to stop it. The same day a second column left the place, but was met by another division of Ney's corps and driven back into Ulm. The corps of Marshal Lannes was ordered to support that of Marshal Ney, and that same evening the two corps slept on the heights which overlook Ulm on the left bank of the Danube, while Marmont approached it on the right. The Emperor took post at Elchingen, which was the key of Bohemia. Ulm was closely invested, and its outposts driven in.

The Austrians remained in this situation four days without making any overture. In the meantime, Memmingen had surrendered with its garrison of six

thousand men, the news of which was brought the Emperor in a wretched bivouac, where it was necessary to procure a plank for him to keep his feet out of the water. He had just received the capitulation, when Prince Maurice Lichtenstein came with a flag of truce from Marshal Mack. He was led forward on horseback with his eyes bandaged. When he was presented to the Emperor, his look showed that he did not expect to find him there. Mack, not suspecting his presence, had sent to treat for the evacuation of Ulm and for permission for the army which occupied it to return to Austria. The French themselves allow that it was the constant practice of the enemy's generals to attempt to outwit their own, whenever Buonaparte was not on the spot. The Emperor could not help smiling at the proposal, and said, "What reason have I to comply with this demand? In a week you will be in my power without conditions. You expect the advance of the Russian army, which is scarcely in Bohemia yet; and besides, if I let you go, what guarantee have I that your troops will not be made to serve when once they are united with the Russians? I have not forgotten Marengo. I suffered M. de Melas to go; and Moreau had to fight his troops at the end of two months, in spite of the most solemn promises to conclude peace.\* There are no laws of war to appeal to, after such conduct as that of your government towards me. Most assuredly, I have not sought you; and then again I cannot rely on any engagements into which your general might enter with me, because it will depend on himself alone to keep his word. It would be a different thing if you had one of your princes in Ulm, and he were to bind himself; but I believe the Archduke is gone." Prince Maurice replied in the best manner he could, and protested that the army would

\* This was what was called ambition in Buonaparte; because he had to put down these continual breaches of faith and ever-springing hopes of the subjugation of France.

not leave the place without the conditions he demanded. "I shall not grant them," rejoined the Emperor; "there is the capitulation of your general who commanded at Memmingen; carry it to Marshal Mack, and tell him I will grant no other terms. Besides, I am in no hurry; the longer he delays, the worse he will render his situation and that of you all. For the rest, I shall have the corps which took Memmingen here to-morrow, and we shall then see."

Prince Lichtenstein was conducted back to Ulm. The same evening General Mack wrote a letter to the Emperor, in which he plainly stated that the only consolation which was left him in his misfortunes was his being obliged to treat with him; that no other person should have made him accept such mortifying conditions; but since fortune would have it so, he awaited his orders. Next morning Berthier went to Ulm and returned in the evening with the capitulation, by which the whole army surrendered. It was to march out with the honours of war, file off before the French army, lay down its arms, and set out for France, with the exception of the generals and officers, who had permission to return home on condition of not serving till a complete exchange. For eight days that the French troops had passed before Ulm, it had rained incessantly: all at once the rain ceased, and the Austrian army filed off in the finest weather imaginable. That was a day glorious to France, and that threw back once more to a perilous distance the ever-returning, undismayed hope of tyrants to set their feet once for all upon the necks of mankind! Mack has been loudly accused of treachery on this occasion, without any positive grounds. He was probably under the influence of that species of fascination which takes place in the intellectual as well as the physical world from an apprehension of superior power; and which rendered him incapable of summoning resolution to meet the danger when it came, as it had before deprived him of the faculty of locomotion to avoid it.

The outrageous revilers of Mack will hardly include the Archduke Ferdinand in the same censure, who yet suffered the Austrian force to be cooped up in this precarious position from the same want of decision, and left it to its fate a few days before. Mack was, however, guilty of a greater offence than even the surrender of Ulm ; he paid Buonaparte a visit after the signature of the capitulation at the Abbey of Elchingen, who drew from him (as men are communicative in calamity) the secrets of the allies, as it respected their new engagements and ulterior objects. Mack was afterwards confined in an Austrian dungeon ; where it was not known for a long time what became of him. General Mathieu Dumas had it in charge to accompany him back to Ulm and to make the necessary dispositions for the ceremony of the following day. The French army was drawn up in order of battle on the neighbouring heights ; the dress and accoutrements of the soldiers being put into the best state that circumstances would admit. The drums beat—the bands played ; the gates of Ulm opened ; the Austrian army advanced in silence, filed off slowly, and went, corps by corps, to lay down its arms at a certain spot which had been previously agreed upon. This day put into the power of the French thirty-six thousand men ; six thousand had been taken at Memmingen, and about two thousand at the battle of Wertingen ; so that the total loss of the Austrians could be estimated at little short of fifty thousand men, with seventy pieces of cannon and about three thousand five hundred horses, which served to mount a division of dragoons, which had come from Boulogne on foot. The ceremony lasted the whole day. The Emperor (who flung more glory into one day then, than would fill up whole years now) was posted on a little hill in front of the centre of his army ; a large fire had been lighted, and by this fire he received the Austrian generals to the number of seventeen. He complained of the

iniquitous proceeding of their government “in coming without any declaration of war to seize him by the throat ;” and said, that, “the Aulic council would have done better, if instead of mixing up Asiatic hordes in European quarrels it had joined with him to repel Russian encroachment.” Thus early did the dread of Russian power haunt him ; and so clearly did he think it the policy of the other continental states to make head against it. But it was not the irruption of barbarism which they feared, but the progress of light and civilization ! A trifling circumstance occurred during this interview, which sets Buonaparte’s character in a just light. An officer, more remarkable for his petulance than his wit, repeated aloud an expression as coming from one of the soldiers, tending to throw ridicule on the vanquished. Napoleon, whose ear caught up everything, was highly displeased ; and sent one of his aide-de-camps to tell that general officer to retire, saying to those near him, “He must have little respect for himself who insults men in misfortune !”\*

\* His address to the Austrian generals was thus conceived :—

“ Gentlemen, I am sorry that such brave men as you have shown yourselves should become the victims of the follies of a cabinet which cherishes insane projects, and which does not hesitate to compromise the dignity of the Austrian nation, and to trifle with the services of its generals. Your names are known to me—they are honourably known wherever you have fought. Examine the conduct of those who have compromised you. What could be more unjust than to attack me without a declaration of war ? Is it not unjust to bring foreign invasion upon a country ? Is it not betraying Europe to introduce Asiatic barbarians into her disputes ? If good faith had been kept, the Aulic council, instead of attacking me, ought to have sought my alliance to force the Russians back into the north. The present alliance is that of dogs, shepherds, and wolves against sheep—such a scheme could not have been devised by any statesman. It is fortunate for you that I have been successful ; had I been defeated, the cabinet of Vienna would have soon perceived its error, and would then have regretted it.

“ Your master has unjustly waged war against me : I tell you frankly, I do not know why we fight ; I do not know what they would have with me. It is not in this single army that my resources consist ; but even if it was so, my army and myself could perform wonders ; but I appeal to you on account of your own prisoners,

The Emperor slept at Elchingen, and set out next day for Augsburg, where he lodged at the bishop's palace. He stayed there only time enough to arrange a new set of marches for the troops, and then departed. He had learned fresh particulars of the approach of the Russians. Travellers from Lintz had seen the first troops of that nation enter the town, and place themselves in carts and waggons collected beforehand, hastening forward to the Rhine. The news of the capture of Ulm soon after reached their commander-in-chief, Kutusow, and made a change in his plans. These same Russians who were now pressing on in the full confidence of their brutality and ignorance to the frontiers of France (like a herd of filthy swine snuffing another Poland) and for the third time compelled to turn back, made a sad outcry when some years after the French returned the intended compliment—they revenged it too by accident—God knows not by right, unless failure in wrong constitutes a right! From Augsburg Buonaparte set forward for Munich, where, though the elector had not yet returned, he was well received by the Bavarians; and the city was illuminated. The French army now crossed the Iser over all the bridges from that of Munich to that of Plading, and approached

who will soon have to be marched through France; they will see by what spirit my people are animated, and with what eagerness they rally round my standard. The advantageous position of my nation is this, by only speaking a single word, 200,000 men will rush to my assistance, and in six weeks time will be well disciplined soldiers. Whereas your recruits march only by compulsion, and, after several years' training, you cannot make soldiers of them.

“I will once more give a piece of advice to my brother, the Emperor of Germany; which is, that he will make peace without delay: the time is now arrived, when he should recollect that all empires have their allotted term. The idea of the dynasty of Lorraine being at an end ought to terrify him. I want nothing on the continent. It is ships, colonies, and commerce, that I stand in need of; and the possession of them is as advantageous to you as to us.”

General Mack answered, that the Emperor had no desire of going to war, but was forced into it by Russia. “In that case,” replied the Emperor, “you are no longer a power.”

the Inn. The Emperor, with a large portion of the army, took the road to Mühldorf, where the Russians had just been. Beyond this, there was not a single bridge which they had not burned, thus giving a fore-taste of their dexterity at the work of devastation and an intelligible warning what sort of customers they were. From Mühldorf the Emperor proceeded to Burkhausen and thence to Brannau. A garrison of two thousand Russians left in the latter place would have occasioned considerable inconvenience and delay, but they had only burned the bridge over the Inn. The bridge at Lintz was also burned: the troops here crossed to the left bank of the Danube, and were pushed forward by slow and cautious marches into Bohemia, following the track of the Russians. At Lintz, Buonaparte received a visit from the Elector of Bavaria and his son; and Duroc, who had been dispatched on a mission to Berlin, rejoined him in that town. He brought back nothing satisfactory: it appeared pretty certain that the conduct of Prussia would be governed by events, or in other words, that Napoleon would have to reckon that power too among his enemies, should fortune prove unfavourable to him. He seems to have drawn the natural inference that should fortune prove favourable to him, this would give him at least an equal right to use his discretion with respect to Prussia—an inference (unavoidable as it is) which has been aggravated into the most wanton cruelty and injustice!

At Lintz also the Emperor received accounts of the army of Italy and of the retreat of the Archduke Charles towards Vienna, after a sanguinary but indecisive action with Massena. General Giulay, one of the officers included in the capitulation of Ulm, came with a flag of truce to propose an armistice; but as the object evidently was to gain time and to allow the Archduke and the Russians to form a junction at Vienna, which might save the Austrian monarchy from the danger which threatened it, Buonaparte

would not listen to it, and said they might fight and treat at the same time. He also observed that General Giulay had no power to treat for the Russians ; and sent him back, if his intentions were serious, to have them included as parties in the armistice. Buonaparte therefore set out for Vienna and arrived at St. Polten, where he was detained a day or two by a severe check which one of Marshal Mortier's divisions had received from the Russians. This with the loss of three eagles vexed the Emperor ; and by no means put him into a better humour for agreeing to General Giulay's proposals, which were renewed here. On the contrary, the troops were urged on to Vienna, and Marshals Lannes and Murat entered that capital by a stratagem of war which showed a good deal of spirit and adroitness. General Giulay was still with the Emperor, and for the last fortnight there had been much talk of an armistice, so that the usual strictness of discipline was relaxed. The Austrians, placed on the left bank of the Danube, had however made the necessary dispositions for burning the bridge of the Tabor, and had merely covered it by a post of hussars. Marshals Lannes and Murat, anxious to save this means of communication, so important to the army, went themselves accompanied by a few officers, to the Austrian piquet ; entered into conversation with them on the rumours of an armistice ; and while their attention was thus drawn off, a column of Lannes' grenadiers, headed by an intelligent officer, advanced through the suburbs of Vienna in the island of the Prater, gained the bridge in double-quick time, and after throwing into the water all the fireworks prepared for blowing it up, seized upon the cannon, and established themselves on the opposite bank of the river. This surprise, which was executed in a moment, was of the utmost consequence, as it prevented the junction of the Archduke with the Russians, and put Vienna with all its stores and the advantages it possessed into the hands of Napoleon.

He was much pleased with the success of this bold stroke, and fixed his head-quarters at the palace of Schönbrunn, where he prepared to manœuvre with all his forces (which were pouring into Vienna from every quarter), either upon the Russians or the Archduke Charles, according as either one or the other should be most within his reach.

The army of General Kutusow, which had recrossed the Danube at Stein (and which if it had proceeded in the first instance to Vienna might have given a different turn to affairs) was marching by Znaim to rejoin the main Russian army at Olmutz, where the Emperor Alexander was. The Archduke Charles, instead of advancing to protect the capital, was obliged to turn to the right so as to gain Hungary, and troops were instantly marched upon Presburg, to remove still further off the possibility of his effecting a junction with the Russians. Mortier and Marmont outside the walls of Vienna watched the roads to Italy and Hungary. Ney was still in the country of Saltzburg before Kuffstein, which had a strong garrison. Napoleon was somewhat dissatisfied that Massena had not come up in time to join him before he gave battle to the Russians. He set out for Znaim ; and on the day of his departure, the advanced-guard overtook the Russian rear-guard under Prince Bagration, and had a severe action with it at Hollbrunn. Both parties behaved like men, and General Oudinot was wounded. Buonaparte in consequence gave the command of the grenadiers to Duroc, being desirous that he should distinguish himself during the campaign. The French picked up a number of stragglers and sick in the rear of the Russian march. They appear to have imbibed thus early an overweening contempt for their doughty antagonists from the stupidity of their countenances. But stupidity has its advantages as well as wit. If a man strikes his hand against a piece of wood or stone, he will be the sufferer. At Znaim the Emperor was informed

that the Russians had marched by the road to Brunn ; and he made the army take the same road. In that city he was joined by Bernadotte's four regiments of light cavalry under Kellermann ; they had come by the Budweis road, and had left Bernadotte and his corps with the Bavarian cavalry under General Wrede (which was worn out with fatigue in its pursuit of the Archduke Ferdinand) at Iglau in Bohemia. On his arrival at Brunn, Buonaparte found the citadel evacuated and the magazines full of stores, as if a friend had just quitted the place ; and pushed on that same evening with all the cavalry to Olmutz. At the first post they fell in with the enemy's rear-guard, and a sharp action ensued, in which the horse grenadiers of the guard succeeded in cutting the Russian line in two. It was dark before this smart affair was over. The Emperor returned to Brunn, and came next day upon the ground, where it had occurred to him to place his army, which was coming up in different directions. He moved on the cavalry of the advanced-guard to Vichau ; went thither himself, and on his return walked his horse over all the sinuosities and inequalities of the ground in front of the position which he had ordered to be taken. He paused at every height, had the distances measured, and frequently said to his attendants, " Gentlemen, examine the ground well ; you will have a part to act upon it." It was the same on which the battle of Austerlitz was fought, and which was occupied by the Russians before the battle. He passed the whole day on horseback, inspected the position of each of the corps of his army, and remarked on the left of General Suchet's division, a single hillock overlooking the whole front of that division. The Santon was there, as if for the express purpose : here he had brought the same night fourteen Austrian pieces of cannon, part of those found at Brunn. As *caissons* could not be placed there, two hundred charges of powder were piled up behind each of them ; the foot of the Santon

was then cut away as an escarpment, so as to secure it from assault. The Emperor returned to sleep at Brunn.

After the occupation of Vienna and the affair of Hollbrunn, Napoleon was strongly solicited by all about him to make peace. The difficulty was, after he had made it, to make others keep it. He was nevertheless himself disposed to it; but the Russians were in presence, and it was first requisite to measure his strength with them. Two envoys arrived from the Emperor of Austria, M. Stadion and another, announcing the arrival of a third from the Emperor Alexander; but the Emperor contented himself with referring them to M. Talleyrand, who was expected at Vienna, of which General Clarke had just been appointed governor. It was at this period that Buonaparte received the news of the battle of Trafalgar, with which Nelson closed the career of his triumphs and his life. The French fleet, though superior in force, was not only beaten but destroyed by the courage of the English sailors and the skill of their daring and high-spirited commander; and has remained from that time a mere wreck of itself. The Spanish Admiral Gravina, who was wounded in the fight, died in consequence; and Villeneuve soon after put an end to himself, unable to bear the disgrace of so many defeats and disasters. This event took place on the 21st of October, 1805. Buonaparte seeing all his hopes of naval victory thus at once "in the deep bosom of the ocean buried," probably thought it necessary to do something to parry the blow, and immediately set himself about it.

He had been several days at Brunn, when he ordered the corps of Bernadotte to draw nearer. This augured the approach of something decisive: but he wished first to try the effect or to gain the credit of an act of courtesy. He sent for one of his aide-de-camps (Savary, afterwards Duke of Rovigo) at daybreak: he had passed the night over his maps:

his candles were burnt down to the sockets ; he held a letter in his hand, and, after being silent some moments, he abruptly said, " Set out to Olmutz ; deliver this letter to the Emperor of Russia, and tell him, that having heard of his arrival in his army, I have sent you to salute him in my name. If he questions you," added he, " you know what answer to give under such circumstances." Savary left the Emperor and proceeded to the French advanced posts of Vichau, where he took a trumpeter, and so repaired to those of the Russians, only about a league distant on the road to Olmutz. He was detained at the first post of Cossacks, till notice could be given to Prince Bagration, who sent him on to Olmutz to Kutusow, the commander-in-chief : this journey was performed through the whole Russian army, which he saw assembling and taking arms, as the morning rose. Kutusow asked him for the despatch which he had brought for the Emperor ; observing that he slept in the fortress, and that the gates could not be opened at present. He went away, leaving Savary with an officer belonging to the Russian staff, among whom were a great many young men who crowded round and talked loudly of the ambition of France and of the means of curbing it. At ten in the forenoon a bustle took place in the street, and on inquiring the cause of it, the aide-de-camp was told, " It is the Emperor." He had but just time to throw off his cloak, and take his despatch out of his pocket-book, when Alexander entered the room where the envoy had been waiting. He made a motion for all present to retire, and they were left alone. Savary was struck with the nobleness of the Czar's figure : he was at this time six-and-twenty. He was already hard of hearing with his left ear, and turned the right to hear what was said to him. He spoke in broken sentences, slowly, and laying a stress upon the last syllables, but in the best French, without any accent. After hearing Savary's message, and taking the letter, he said, " I

duly appreciate the proceeding of your master ; it is with regret that I have armed against him, and I shall seize with great pleasure the first opportunity of giving him that assurance. He has long been the object of my admiration." Then, changing the subject, he said, "I will go and peruse this letter, and bring you an answer to it." In half an hour Alexander returned ; and holding his answer with the address turned downwards, entered into a long conversation with Savary, in which he laid it down in a dictatorial but good-humoured tone, that France, to show her moderation and good faith, could do no less than restore all she had been fighting for during the last ten years, being contented with the honour of beating the allies, who would not from that time (as they could lose nothing in the end) stand in the same awe of her encroachments and ambition. When this conversation was over, the Emperor gave Savary his answer to the letter he had brought from Napoleon, still holding the address downwards, and adding—"Here is my answer ; the address does not express the title he has of late assumed. I attach no importance to such trifles :"—the address was, "To the Chief of the French Government." Nevertheless, it was for such trifles that Europe had been at war for the last ten years, and continued so for the next ten. Savary was then conducted back to the advanced posts ; and on his way saw the Russian guards pass by, which had just come from St. Petersburg to join the army. They were composed of men of great stature, and who seemed insensible to fatigue. M. de Novosilzow wished to accompany the French aide-de-camp back to Brunn, as he had particular business with M. de Haugwitz, who was expected there from Berlin, but this wheedling proposal M. Savary declined. He found Napoleon at the posthouse at Posorzitz, three quarters of a mile from the last outposts, and gave him the letter and an account of all that had passed. He appeared thoughtful for some time, connecting

what he now heard with the hints which Mack had dropped at Ulm and with the reported defection of Prussia. At length, he desired Savary to return with all speed and propose an interview with the Emperor Alexander for the morrow. He did so accordingly, and the Russian Emperor seemed disposed to grant it; but on a report that the French were retreating, Napoleon having fallen back purposely to the position he had previously chosen for the battle, Alexander was persuaded to send Prince Dolgorouki in his stead. When Buonaparte heard of his arrival, he was walking in the bivouacs of the infantry, where he had slept upon some straw. Such was his desire for peace, that scarce hearing the message he mounted his horse, and hastened to the spot, his piquet being hardly able to keep up with him. He alighted, walked alone with Prince Dolgorouki on the high road; but the latter gave some offence by what he said, for Buonaparte replied sharply—"If that is what you have to say to me, go and tell the Emperor Alexander that I had no notion of these expectations when I asked to see him; I would only have shown him my army, and referred to his equity for the conditions of a peace. If he will have it so, we must fight: I wash my hands of it." The prince then took leave, and when he was gone the Emperor made his aide-de-camp repeat over and over all that had passed, exclaiming at every pause—"But those people must be mad to insist on my giving up Italy, when it is impossible for them to take Vienna from me. *What plans had they then, and what would they have done with France, if I had been beaten?* Let it end as God pleases; but by my faith, before eight-and-forty hours are over, I shall have given them a sound drubbing!"

While thus speaking, he returned on foot to the first post of infantry of the army; it was the carbineers of the 17th. The Emperor was irritated, and he vented his impatience by striking with his switch the lumps of earth lying on the road. The sentinel, an

old soldier, overheard him ; and having placed himself at ease, he had his gun between his knees, and was filling his pipe. Napoleon as he passed close by, looked at him and said, " Those Russians fancy they have nothing to do but to swallow us up ! " The old soldier immediately joining in the conversation—" O ho ! " replied he, " that won't be such an easy job—we'll stick ourselves right across ! " This sally made the Emperor laugh ; and resuming his composure, he mounted his horse, and returned to head-quarters.

He now thought of nothing but preparations for the battle, which he resolved to put off no longer. Bernadotte had joined him with two divisions of infantry ; Soult had three ; Lannes two ; the grenadiers formed a strong one ; the foot-guards one. Marshal Davoust had one within reach ; the Emperor, besides the light cavalry, had three divisions of dragoons, two of cuirassiers, and the two regiments of carbineers, with the horse-guards. He caused abundance of provisions and ammunition of all kinds to be brought upon the ground from Brunn. It was the last day of November, 1805 ; the next day, the 1st of December, he himself stationed all the divisions of the army, seeming to know the ground as well as the environs of Paris. Marshal Davoust occupied the extreme right, being in communication between Brunn and Vienna. One of his divisions was commanded by General Friant. Marshal Davoust was separated by ponds and long narrow defiles from Marshal Soult, who was opposed to the left of the Russian army, the division of General Legrand forming his right, with that of St. Hilaire to the left of Legrand's, and Vandamme's division to the left of St. Hilaire's. In the second line, behind Marshal Soult, was the division of grenadiers, and on their left were Bernadotte's two divisions. On the left of Soult, Lannes was posted with his two corps on a ground rather in advance on the road to Olmutz, near the Santon. The light cavalry were placed between Lannes and Soult, with

an open ground in front, the dragoons behind, and the cuirassiers with the horse-guards at a short distance. The Emperor passed the whole day on horseback, speaking to the soldiers, viewing the artillery, and inspecting all the appurtenances of the war. He dined at his bivouac, where he was met by all the marshals, to whom he enlarged on what might happen the next day. The Russian army was seen arriving the whole afternoon, and taking up a position to the right about a quarter of a mile off.

In the evening of the 1st of December there was an irregular firing of small arms to the right, which was kept up so late as to give the Emperor some uneasiness. He sent to see what it was ; and it turned out to be a skirmish between General Legrand's advanced-guard and the Russians, who wished to gain possession of a village at the foot of their position for the purpose of attacking the right of the French army the next day. The moon at first shone bright ; but the night becoming overcast, they desisted, and merely collected their force together on that point. The aide-de-camp, who had been sent to reconnoitre, on his return found the Emperor lying on some straw in a hut which the soldiers had made for him, and so fast asleep that he was obliged to shake him in order to awake him. When he had heard the report, he desired it to be repeated ; sent for Marshal Soult and mounted his horse to go himself and inspect his whole line and see this movement of the Russians on his right : he approached as near to it as possible. On his return through the bivouacs, he was recognised by the soldiers, who spontaneously lighted torches of straw : this spread from one end of the army to the other : in a moment there was a general illumination, and the air was rent with shouts of *Vive l'Empereur!* It was very late before he returned ; and though he continued to take repose, it was not uninterrupted by uneasiness as to what might be the object of the movement on his right on the following day. He was

awake and stirring by daybreak, to get the whole of the troops under arms in silence.

There was a thick fog which enveloped all the bivouacs, so that it was impossible to distinguish objects at any distance. This was an advantage to the French, and gave them time to form their ranks. As it grew light, the fog seemed disposed to clear off. An unbroken silence prevailed to the very extremity of the horizon: no one would have suspected that there were so many men and so many noisy engines of destruction crowded together in so small a space. Buonaparte sent again to reconnoitre the position of the Russians to the right: they were already in motion; but the remains of the fog made it difficult to distinguish what they were about. It was scarcely seven in the morning: at length the fog cleared off, and the sun rose in splendour. The two armies appeared almost close upon one another.\*

\* "When we arrived at Austerlitz," says Rapp, "the Russians, ignorant of the Emperor's skilful dispositions to draw them to the ground which he had marked out, and seeing our advanced-guards give way before their columns, conceived the victory won. According to their notions, the advanced-guard would suffice to secure an easy triumph. But the battle began—they found what it was to fight, and on every point were repulsed. At one o'clock the victory was still uncertain; for they fought admirably. They resolved on a last effort, and directed close masses against our centre. The imperial guard deployed; artillery, cavalry, infantry, were marched against a bridge which the Russians attacked, and this movement, concealed from Napoleon by the inequality of the ground, was not observed by us. At this moment I was standing near him, waiting orders. We heard a well-maintained fire of musketry; the Russians were repulsing one of our brigades. Hearing this sound, the Emperor ordered me to take the Mamelukes, two squadrons of chasseurs, one of the grenadiers of the guard, and to observe the state of things. I set off at full gallop, and, before advancing a cannon-shot, perceived the disaster. The Russian cavalry had penetrated our squares, and were sabring our men. In the distance could be perceived masses of Russian cavalry and infantry in reserve. At this juncture the enemy advanced: four pieces of artillery arrived at a gallop, and were planted in position against us. On my left I had the brave Morland, on my right General d'Allemagne. 'Courage, my brave fellows!' cried I to my party; 'behold your brothers, your friends, butchered; let us avenge them—avenge our standards! Forward!' These few words inspired my soldiers; we dashed at full speed upon

The Emperor saw his whole army, infantry and cavalry, formed into columns. He was surrounded by his marshals, who teased him to begin: but he resisted their importunities till the fire of the Russians on the right became brisker; he then dismissed all the marshals and ordered them to commence the attack. The onset of the whole army at once had something appalling in it: you might hear the words of command of the different officers. It marched, as if to exercise, to the very foot of the Russian position, halting at times to rectify its distances and direction. General St. Hilaire attacked the front of the Russian position, called in the language of the country the hill of the Pratzer. He there sustained for two hours a tremendous fire of musketry, which might have staggered any one but himself: he had not a battalion that was not engaged in the thickest of the fight. Vandamme, who had more space to traverse, came up at this point of time, attacked and overthrew the enemy's columns, and became master of their position and artillery. The Emperor immediately marched one of Bernadotte's divisions and a part of the grena-

the artillery, and took them. The enemy's horse, which awaited our attack, were overthrown by the same charge, and fled in confusion, galloping, like us, over the wrecks of our own squares. In the meantime the Russians rallied; but a squadron of horse grenadiers coming to our assistance, I could then halt, and await the reserves of the Russian guard. Again we charged; and this charge was terrible. The brave Morland fell by my side. It was absolute butchery. We fought man to man, and so mingled together, that the infantry on neither side dared to fire, lest they should kill their own men. The intrepidity of our troops finally bore us in triumph over all opposition: the enemy fled in disorder in sight of the two Emperors of Austria and Russia, who had taken their station on a rising ground, in order to be spectators of the contest. They ought to have been satisfied; for I can assure you they witnessed no child's play. For my own part, my good friend, I never passed so delightful a day. The Emperor received me most graciously when I arrived to tell him that the victory was ours; I still grasped my broken sabre, and, as this scratch upon my head bled very copiously, I was all covered with blood. He named me general of division. The Russians returned not again to the charge—they had had enough; we captured everything—their cannon, their baggage, their all in short."

diars to the aid of Vandamme and St. Hilaire, while he ordered Marshal Lannes to lose no time in falling upon the right of the Russians, that they might not come to the relief of their left, who were wholly occupied in defending themselves. They would have fallen back, and re-ascended the Pratzer: but were followed so closely by General Legrand and by Friant's division (detached from Marshal Davoust) that they were obliged to stand at bay, neither advancing nor retiring. General Vandamme then, under the superintendence of Soult and supported by a division of Bernadotte's, made a sudden change of direction by the right flank for the purpose of turning and enclosing all the troops engaged with St. Hilaire's division. This movement succeeded; and the two divisions, united on the Pratzer itself by this manœuvre, made a second change of direction, still wheeling to their right, and descended from the Pratzer to attack in the rear all the troops opposed to General Legrand, thus following the steps of the Russians the night before and making a complete semicircle. Buonaparte, seeing how things went, ordered up the rest of the grenadiers and the foot-guards, to complete the enemy's disorder, and thus decided the battle. He instantly dispatched his aide-de-camp, Lebrun, to Paris with the news, and sent off messengers to the Electors of Bavaria and Wurtemberg.

General Vandamme had received a check at the commencement of his first change of direction, the fourth regiment of the line losing one of its eagles in a charge of Russian cavalry; but the accident had no bad consequences from the timely succour of the *chasseurs* of the guard, and the grenadiers on duty about the Emperor. He had ordered Bernadotte's division, instead of turning round upon the enemy with Vandamme's the second time, to go right forward upon the infantry of the Russian guard. It did so; broke it, and drove it fighting a full league; but it returned back, nobody knew why, to its first posi-

tion, where to his great astonishment Buonaparte found it in the evening. The left of the French army under Lannes, and the cavalry of Murat had, in the meantime, broken and put to flight the whole right of the Russian army, which at nightfall took the road to Austerlitz, to join the relics of that part with which Marshal Soult had been engaged. Had Bernadotte's division continued marching in the direction prescribed to it, instead of falling back, it would have been posted across the road from Austerlitz to Hollitsch, by which the Russian army was retreating, and thus have completed its destruction. Bernadotte's want of good-will to the work began about this time to lead him into repeated blunders; and probably his blunders helped to increase his ill-will. All the Russian troops that had descended from the Pratzer were taken prisoners on the spot. There were left on the field of battle one hundred pieces of cannon, with forty-three thousand prisoners of war, exclusive of the wounded and slain who remained on the ground. This was one of Buonaparte's great battles. No wonder if in the end he became swollen and, as it were, choked up with victories! He came back in the evening along the whole line, where the different regiments had fought. It was already dark: he recommended silence to those who accompanied him that he might hear the cries of the wounded; he immediately went to the spot where they were, alighted himself, and ordered a glass of brandy to be given them. In this manner, he remained till very late upon the field of battle; his escort passed the whole night upon it, taking the cloaks from the Russian dead to cover the wounded with them. He himself ordered a large fire to be kindled near each of them, sent for a muster-master, and did not retire till he arrived; and having left him a piquet of his own men, enjoined them not to quit the wounded till they were lodged in the hospital. These brave men loaded him with blessings, which found the way to his heart much better than

all the flatteries of courtiers. He thus won the affection of his soldiers, who knew that when they suffered it was not his fault, and who therefore never spared themselves in his service. It was so late when they arrived at Brunn, that there was only time to issue the order to Marshal Davoust to collect his corps and pursue the Russians the following day.

## CHAPTER XXXVI.

## THE TREATY OF PRESBURG.

Interviews between the Emperors of France and Austria ; Alexander sets out for St. Petersburg ; Napoleon arrives at the Palace of Schonbrunn to accelerate the conferences for peace ; treaty of Presburg ; entry of Russians and English into Naples ; sinking of public credit at Paris ; interesting anecdote of Napoleon ; Naples occupied by the French troops ; medals and trophies in commemoration of the victory of Austerlitz ; the Emperor's reproof to Denon ; death of Pitt ; effects of his measures ; Fox ; a prospect of war between Prussia and France ; artifices of the war parties at Paris ; Napoleon quits the capital for his army ; Prince Louis killed in an action with Lannes ; the Emperor arrives at Jena.

ON the 3rd of December, the day following the battle, Prince John of Lichtenstein arrived at the castle of Austerlitz charged with a message from his master to solicit an interview with Napoleon, to which the latter assented. The Emperors both of Austria and Russia were in a precarious situation, there being no escape left for their troops in the line of retreat on which they had been driven but the bridge of Göding at Hollitsch, to which the corps of Davoust was nearer than the wrecks of the Russian and Austrian army. Napoleon alone knew that Davoust was inferior in numbers to the allies, and that they might, therefore, still force their way through him ; he also apprehended the accession of Prussia to the coalition, and had just learned by intercepted dispatches from M. Stadion, that the Archduke Charles had arrived on the Danube, while Massena was still on the other side of the Julian Alps. He, therefore, granted the interview

which had been solicited, in the hope of concluding peace and avoiding fresh hazards.

On the 4th, at nine in the morning, the Emperor set out with his suite and guards, and proceeded along the high road of Hollitsch to a mill in front of the advanced posts of Bernadotte, about three leagues from Austerlitz. Napoleon arrived first, and ordered two fires to be made; the horse-guards were drawn up in order of battle, two hundred paces in the rear. It was not long before the Emperor of Austria was announced. He came in a landau, accompanied by Princes John and Maurice Lichtenstein, the Prince of Wurtemberg, Prince Schwartzenberg, Generals Kienmayer, Bubna, and Stutterheim, and two superior officers of Hulans. There was with the Emperor of Austria an escort of Hungarian cavalry, which halted as the French had done, about two hundred paces from the spot where the interview was held. The Emperor Napoleon, who was on foot, went to meet the Emperor of Austria from the place where the fire was as far as the carriage, and embraced as he accosted him. Prince John of Lichtenstein alighted from the same carriage, and followed the Emperor of Austria to the Emperor's fire: there he remained during the whole interview, as did Marshal Berthier, near the Emperor. All the other persons in the suite of the two sovereigns were together at one and the same fire, which was separated only by the high road from that of the Emperors. The conversation here turned on the events of the battle, the French studying to say nothing that might be galling to the feelings of their adversaries; but no one could make out what was passing at the other fire. At any rate the parties seemed to be in excellent humour; they laughed, which was construed into a favourable omen, and accordingly in about an hour the two sovereigns separated after a mutual embrace. The attendants then ran to do their duty, and as they approached, Napoleon said to the Emperor of

Austria, "I agree to it ; but your majesty must promise not to make war upon me again."—"No, I promise you I will not," replied the Emperor of Austria, "and I will keep my word." He did so—after the manner of princes !

The day was drawing to a close, when the two Emperors parted, and took the road to their respective armies. Napoleon rode his horse at a foot pace, musing on what had just been said, and on what he meant to do. He called to General Savary, and said, "Run after the Emperor of Austria : tell him that I have desired you to go and wait at his head-quarters for the adhesion of the Emperor of Russia, as far as he is concerned, to what has just been concluded between us. When you are in possession of this adhesion, proceed to the *corps d'armée* of Marshal Davoust, stop his movement, and tell him what has happened." But the wily Tartar had taken the affair into his own hands. Savary, according to the instructions of the Austrian Emperor, found Alexander at Göding the next morning, where, though it was only four or five o'clock, he was already up; and his sappers were busy in preparing to destroy the bridge, as soon as his army should have passed, which it did shortly after, to the number of twenty-six thousand men, without cannon, without baggage-waggons, many without arms, the greater part without knapsacks,\* a great many wounded, but still with the countenance of men resigned to their fortune and marching intrepidly in their ranks. At the interview with the French aide-de-camp, Alexander paid a number of compliments to the talents displayed by his master in the battle a few days before; saying at the same time that it was the first battle he had been in; and he gave his word to comply with all that the king of the Romans had stipulated for him.

\* Till 1806, the Russian infantry laid their knapsacks on the ground before they began to fire ; so that when they were repulsed, they lost all their baggage.

On this understanding he received an assurance that he and his troops should retire unmolested. After the Russians had filed off, the bridge of Göding was destroyed to prevent pursuit, and Savary returned in search of Davoust. He had arrived the day before within a short half-league of the bridge of Göding, and was preparing to force his way to it through an Austrian detachment, when he received a note from the Emperor Alexander to inform him of the interview between the Emperors of France and Austria, and that an armistice had taken place, leaving it to be supposed that he himself was included in it. Davoust deemed it his duty to defer to the positive assurance of Alexander; he in consequence suspended his movement, and accordingly Savary found him on the morning of the 5th in the same place where he was the day before, and the Russians at a safe distance, whereas on the preceding day he might in half an hour have been master of Göding and of the bridge over the Marche, when the Russian army was still two or three leagues off on the Austerlitz road, facing Bernadotte. It was at the moment when the Emperor Francis parted from the Emperor Alexander to go to the interview with Buonaparte that Marshal Davoust was on the point of forcing Göding, the only retreat of the Russian troops; and in this critical situation the Emperor of Russia thought fit to write that note, to which Marshal Davoust, out of respect for the veracity of the monarch, judged it right on his part to give credit, not entertaining the least idea of a trick. As there are some characters on whom no reliance can be placed because they are sunk below contempt, there is another class whose word is not to be taken because they are raised above censure. Savary ventured to drop a hint of what he suspected to some Austrians, who were with him, who only smiled. His eyes were then opened, and it was clear enough why the Emperor of Russia had absented himself from the interview of the preceding day, and why the Emperor

of Austria had come to it. They had divided between them the two parts, which were to extricate them from the dilemma in which each found himself. When Buonaparte afterwards sent General Junot to the Russian army to treat for peace, the Emperor Alexander had set off for St. Petersburg ; and Junot not thinking it his business to follow him, brought back the letter entrusted to him by the Emperor, who was on his return to Vienna. He stopped a few days at Brunn, which he spent in disposing his army in cantonments, causing its losses to be ascertained, inspecting the hospitals, and sending by some of his aide-de-camps, a gratuity of a Napoleon to each wounded soldier, and larger sums to the different officers in the same situation. There is no need to say that this bounty was gratefully received. He also took an opportunity one day of rating Murat soundly for having suffered himself to be deceived by a false report, and losing the chance of enclosing the Russian army on the 3rd by not pushing forward with his cavalry to Olmutz. These *sound ratings* he afterwards paid for at a dear rate. Inferior or vain minds see no distinction between just and unjust blame ; and suppose that it is not reason, but passion and petulance that speaks in their reproof.

He then set out for Schönbrunn to accelerate the conferences for peace which were held at Vienna, and also to see how he stood with Prussia. For several days M. Haugwitz had been near M. Talleyrand ; but he had kept aloof from him, hoping that events would have taken a different turn, as his mission was not to make peace, but war. The Emperor received him the day after his arrival at Schönbrunn. At first he abstained from reproaches, but he let him see that he was not the dupe of the designs of Prussia. He asked the meaning of the Russian army at Breslau, and of another in Hanover, communicating by the Prussian territory with the main army. At last, he began to grow warm and spoke out : "Sir," said he, "is this conduct of your master's towards me frank and sincere?

It would have been more honourable for him to have made war openly upon me, though you have no motive for it: you would have served the allies, because I should have looked twice before I had given battle. You wish to be the allies of all the world: that is not possible: you must choose between them and me. If you are resolved to throw yourselves into the arms of those gentlemen, I shall not oppose your doing so; but if you remain with me, I wish for sincerity, or I will separate myself from you. I prefer open enemies to false friends. If your powers are not sufficient to treat on all those questions, qualify yourself to do so; for my part I shall go and march upon my enemies wherever they are." This address was delivered with great warmth. The Emperor looked down on M. de Haugwitz from the elevated position on which he had been placed by victory: he looked down, too, on baffled spite and detected duplicity. It was this malice at once smothered and laid bare which afterwards burst forth into that prodigious flame of patriotism and loyalty of which we have heard so much, and of which (for what will not folly and madness do in the affairs of men?) we have seen the effects. Because Prussia was foiled in her design to crush and betray France then, it was to give her the right along with the inclination to do so afterwards. The debt of enmity, not paid, accumulates both principal and interest. Buonaparte had Prussia at this time at his mercy, and spared her. Of course, this was not a thing to be soon forgotten or forgiven.

Circumstanced as Buonaparte then was, with the Austrians held in check and the Russians gone, he might in a few marches have turned the whole Prussian monarchy. In this situation, M. Haugwitz, though contrary to his instructions, thought it best to patch up a treaty with France, by which Hanover was ceded to Prussia in lieu of the Margravates, and he was in hopes that this bait would sweeten the bitter alternative to his master. But while he was signing the

treaty with France at Vienna, M. Hardenberg, ignorant of the events at Austerlitz, had signed another at Berlin with the ambassador of England. M. Haugwitz met the bearer of this intelligence half-way between Vienna and Berlin, to which latter place he was hastening to procure the ratification of the king to the convention with Napoleon. But that monarch loudly expressed his disapprobation of what had been done: nevertheless, unable to go to war and as ill brooking peace, not knowing how to fulfil or disentangle himself from so many opposite engagements, he hit upon a middle course between his interest and his honour, which was to keep Hanover as a pledge till the peace. Austria obtained such a peace as in her disastrous condition she might expect. She lost the old Venetian States, which were annexed to the kingdom of Italy. She also had to give up to Bavaria the Tyrol and the country of Salzburg, with some possessions in Suabia, and lastly, the Brisgau to the Grand-Duke of Tuscany. By the same treaty, the Electors of Bavaria and Wurtemberg were made kings, and the Margrave of Baden Grand-Duke. Had Junot followed the Emperor Alexander to St. Petersburg, it is possible peace might have been concluded that year. England, too, might have been included in it, had it been possible for England to submit to peace!

Before his departure from Vienna, Napoleon learned the news of the joint entry of the Russians and English into Naples. He had an old quarrel with the Queen of Naples, who conceived herself privileged both as a queen and a woman to do whatever she pleased. The interference of this double and uncontrolled sway in the affairs of mankind is too much to be borne; nor is there any cure for it but the taking away the power to indulge in its caprices. "As for her," exclaimed Napoleon, on hearing of this new breach of faith, "I am not surprised at her conduct: but woe betide her if I enter Naples—never shall she set foot there again?" He sent officers from his staff to compose

that of the army about to assemble on the Neapolitan frontiers ; and ordered his brother Joseph (whom he had left at Paris to preside over the council of ministers in his absence) to go and take the command of that army. He also received some unpleasant intelligence of another description from Paris. There had been a considerable run upon the national bank ; and the funds had fallen suddenly. This caused him some anxiety, and increased his impatience to be at home. On investigating the matter, he found that the panic had arisen from sinister reports, with which some of those harbingers of mischief who had been suffered to return and infest their old haunts in the Faubourg St. Germain (and who wished their country ill because they deserved ill of it) had chosen to fill up the pause that precedes the signal of defeat or victory ; and also from an indiscreet (and as it might have proved, ruinous) appropriation of eighty millions of the public revenue to purposes of private speculation.\* This temporary withdrawing of the public money, which was concerted by persons immediately employed by government, and well affected to it, might, if Buonaparte had met with reverses in Moravia, have been fatal to him. Such is the rash and incontinent activity of the French character ! It is singular enough that the Austrians were obliged to pay the first instalments of the contributions levied upon them out of the subsidies sent over from England, and that the French commissioner, M. Bourrienne, went to Hamburgh to receive them.

A circumstance occurred at this period, which places the character of the Emperor in a true and amiable light. During his residence at Vienna, between the battle of Austerlitz and the signature of the peace, he had occasion to remark a young female who pleased him. As chance would have it, she had

\* This alludes to a transaction between the members of the French Victualling-office and the Prince of Peace to supply the Spanish navy with provisions at a certain profit.

herself taken a particular fancy to the Emperor, and she accepted a proposal made to her to go one evening to the palace of Schönbrunn. She spoke only German and Italian; but as the Emperor himself spoke the latter language, they easily became acquainted. He was surprised to learn from this young woman, that she was the daughter of respectable parents, and that in coming to see him she had been swayed by an admiration which had excited in her heart a sentiment she had never yet felt for any other person. This, though a rare circumstance, was ascertained to be a fact: the Emperor respected the innocence of the young lady, sent her home, had arrangements made for her settlement in life, and gave her a portion. Another interview was talked of with a celebrated German countess, the favourite of an English nobleman, which, it is said, had it taken place, might have ended more tragically. Buonaparte was put on his guard, and the assignation was dropped. A few days before his leaving Vienna, the Archduke Charles, for whom the Emperor had a great esteem, solicited an interview with him. They met at a hunting-seat, called La Venerie, near Schönbrunn, and conversed together for a long time in an apartment by themselves.

The Emperor on leaving Vienna passed through Scharding and Passau, where he met General Lauriston, whom he sent as governor to Venice. He arrived at Munich a few days before new-year's day, 1806. The Empress was there, having come to witness the marriage of her son, the Viceroy of Italy, with the Princess Augusta of Bavaria. It was celebrated with great pomp, and the festivities lasted for a week. A match had been talked of between the Princess Augusta and the Prince of Baden; but this was broken off, and the prince gave his hand soon after to Mademoiselle Stephanie Beauharnois, a niece of Josephine. The viceroy returned to Milan; and Buonaparte to Paris, where he arrived towards

the end of January. Shortly after the Emperor's return, accounts were received of the occupation of Naples by the French troops. The remainder of the winter was spent in *fêtes* and amusements. Murat was invested with the sovereignty of the grand duchy of Berg, which Bavaria had ceded to France. M. Talleyrand received the principality of Benevento, and Marshal Bernadotte (contrary to the expectation of many people) that of Ponte-Corvo, both in the kingdom of Naples. The Prince of Baden came to Paris to conclude his marriage, which was celebrated in the chapel of the palace. On this occasion magnificent entertainments were given at the Tuileries. The ladies of the court, most of whom were distinguished for grace and spirit, danced in character at the balls; and these *fêtes*, independently of the immediate interest attached to them, presented all the elegance and splendour of enchanted pageants. 'Tis gone like a fairy revel; nor in the round of ever-rolling years will the like be seen again to humble and to exalt all that there is of pride in the heart of man. Yet why complain of the void that is left? If such things happened every day, there would be nothing in them: it is enough that they survive in poetry and history. If a Buonaparte or a Charlemagne appears once in a thousand years, it gives the world something to think of in the interim! During the same winter he determined to place the crown of Naples on the head of his brother Joseph; and twelve senators were deputed to invest him with the sovereignty. The Emperor also resolved to change the government of Holland, by substituting the monarchical for the elective form (not a change for the better); and the choice of the leading men of the country, who were at this time favourable to France, fell on Prince Louis, the Emperor's brother, who accepted with some reluctance the crown that was offered him. Thus the battle of Austerlitz had the effect of creating three new kings and matching

plebeian with princely blood. Such was the commencement of that system by which Buonaparte "made kings his sentinels, and thrones his Martello towers;" led youth and beauty as a sacrifice or a lure to the shrine of his ambition or policy, and stood on the ground of the Revolution to clasp the hand of its old and natural enemies in close and hollow fellowship. If all this was but a masque, it was a gorgeous one: those who were the most nearly concerned and the best judges, felt it to be something more, and resolved to make another effort to dispel "the horrible shadow."

Several medals and other trophies were executed to commemorate the battle of Austerlitz. Soon after his return to St. Cloud, M. Denon, who had the chief superintendence of works of art, came to the Emperor while at breakfast, bringing with him a series of medals on this subject. It commenced with the departure of the army from the camp at Boulogne to proceed towards the Rhine. The first represented on one side a head of Napoleon, and on the other a French eagle holding fast an English leopard. "What does this mean?" said Napoleon. "Sire," said M. Denon, "it is a French eagle strangling in its talons the leopard, one of the emblems of the coat-of-arms of England." The attendants were astonished to see Napoleon throw this gold medal with the utmost violence to the other end of the room, thus addressing M. Denon: "Vile flatterer! how dare you tell me that the French eagle strangles the English leopard, when I cannot send out to sea the smallest fishing-boat that the English do not seize upon? It is the leopard that strangles the French eagle. Let this medal be instantly destroyed, and never present any of the same kind to me again." Looking over the rest of these medals, and taking up the one relating to the battle itself, he found fault with the design, and desired M. Denon to have it recast. "Put only on one side, *Battle of Austerlitz*, with the date, and on the opposite side the Eagles of France, Austria,

and Russia; trust me, posterity will be at no loss to distinguish the victor." This simple idea of Napoleon's was nevertheless not completely carried into effect; instead of the eagles, were introduced the heads of the three Emperors. It is easy to perceive from this account that the greater part of those pompous inscriptions, of those extravagant compliments, set forth with so much *éclat* and displayed on so many public monuments, were not to the taste of Napoleon, much less of his suggesting. Few men in his place would have manifested the same moderation and simplicity. It was the same sentiment of delicacy which made him refuse Marshal Kellermann, who had been deputed by a large body of his fellow citizens, permission to erect at their own cost a monument expressly in honour of him. This trophy Napoleon could only hope to merit by the course of his whole life. Such was his reply; and if his statue was afterwards fixed at the top of the pillar in the *Place Vendôme*, it was originally intended that the column should be solely in honour of the French armies, and the statue was to have been one of peace. The architect Poyet had also proposed to raise a triumphal pillar in honour of the Emperor, but could not obtain his consent. If the brazen column built of the cannon won by victory excited admiration, the sixty-five fountains which in the same year first poured their waters through the capital, inspired the public gratitude, and proved beyond dispute that the chief of the state was much more occupied in setting on foot works of public utility, than those of a vain glory. In the course of his administration, all that was merely great and useful came from himself; while what appertained to luxury and outward show, was the indirect result of the powerful impulse that had been given to the fine arts, and of the passionate admiration due to one who had achieved so many victories and so many titles to renown.\*

\* The cannon taken at Austerlitz were not all made use of to erect the column in the *Place Vendôme*. M. Gaudin, minister of finance,

In the spring of 1806, Russia had made no declaration of her intentions; Austria had but ill executed the conditions of the treaty; Prussia was restless and uneasy, and England was at her old work. The Emperor, uncertain of the future, sought to strengthen his interests in the east, and sent General Sebastiani, who was just recovered of a severe wound received at the battle of Austerlitz, as his ambassador to Constantinople. In the beginning of that year, however, Mr. Pitt died, and Mr. Fox succeeded him, which gave a short deceitful gleam of hope to the world. While Mr. Pitt lived, war was certain; his death offered a bare chance of peace. He had long been the mouth-piece of the war party, and the darling of that part of the aristocracy who wished to subdue the popular spirit of English freedom, to get the whole power of the country into the hands of a few borough-mongers, and of course to crush and stifle the example and the rising flame of liberty everywhere else. The perverse schemes of this party, the rooted instinct of power in the hearts of kings, Mr. Pitt clothed with a drapery of words, an everlasting tissue of rhetorical common-places, not to express, but to disguise them, and to make it impossible ever to disentangle them from the dark recesses of pride and passion in which they lurked. Without a heart or natural affections, without a head to conceive of good or a hand to execute even the bad he meditated, this parliamentary automaton was a sort of lay-figure to hang a waving tapestry of gaudy phrases upon, so as to screen the designs of ministers and baffle opposition. Engaged

came one day to Napoleon to demand a score of these cannon for his own use. "What then!" exclaimed the Emperor, "is our minister of finance going to make war upon us?"—"No," replied the Duke de Gaéta, "not upon you but upon some villainous old machines that kill the workmen in the mint; and if your majesty will give me twenty of these cannon to reconstruct the beams of the engines, I will have the name of Austerlitz engraved upon them." This appeal prevailed; M. Gaudin had the cannon placed at his disposal; and these engines were used to stamp the heads on the coin of the kings of France!

in a quarrel that was never to have an end, and for an object that must be kept in the back-ground, it was necessary to have a set of plausible excuses always ready, that applied to everything because they really meant nothing, and to find out an orator to ring the changes on them in measured and lofty periods, to whom no fact, feeling, or image in his own breast ever suggested the reality of anything but words, and to whom the shriek of death or the cries of despair were lost in the sound of his own voice. If we were at war, it was for "the existence of social order," a term that included between its extremes the highest liberty or the worst despotism. If we did not make peace, it was because "existing circumstances" would not permit us—no matter whether those circumstances were prosperous or adverse, whether it was we who would not make peace with the enemy or the enemy who would not make peace with us. It was impossible to drive the minister out of his routine of verbiage, or to force an explanation from him that admitted of being either verified or disproved; and with these and a few more phrases of the same stamp he served the ends of his employers, deluded Parliament, and brought the country to the brink of ruin. He died when the power, which he had pledged himself to destroy or to be destroyed by it, had nearly attained its utmost height; and the best thing that can be said for him is that the defeat of all his plans and predictions, either from pride or shame, probably caused his death.

Mr. Fox would no doubt have tried to save both countries from the alternative to which Mr. Pitt's policy wished to force them, but with what success or degree of firmness is not so certain. He had always been Mr. Pitt's ablest and most strenuous antagonist in that ruthless career of ambition and servility to which his rival lent himself; and the debates between them on the question of peace or war (particularly in 1797 and 1798, before Mr. Pitt went out of office)

were some of the most equally sustained, the most animated and characteristic in the records of our parliamentary eloquence. The great leader of opposition was a man of impulse and feeling, generous and sociable to a fault, sanguine in the cause of liberty and truth, and of a plain, straightforward, but strong and well-stored understanding. He had not been the dupe of Mr. Burke's romantic and fanciful view of the French Revolution, with his high-coloured descriptions of the Queen of France and the rest of his apparatus for theatrical effect ; for Mr. Fox, with that justness of thought which is the result of goodness of heart, saw or felt that the whole drift of Mr. Burke's theory went to make politics a question or department of the imagination, and that this could never be true, because politics treat of the public weal and the most general and wide-extended consequences, whereas the imagination can only be appealed to by individual objects and personal interests, and must give a false verdict in all other cases. It would never do, he saw, to make choice of half a dozen *dramatis personæ*, to adorn them with tropes and figures, and sacrifice to this paltry foreground and meretricious embellishing the welfare of millions, who because they were millions could never be brought forward by the imaginative faculty and could only be weighed in the balance of abstract truth and reason. Neither did he suffer himself to be entangled in the mazes of Mr. Pitt's verbal sophistry. He shook off with honest indignation the trammels of words which were attempted to be thrown over him like an enchanter's web ; cleared away the obvious facts from the cloud of technical distinctions rolled over them, strove hard (Antæus-like) to keep the question on the ground of common sense and feeling, which the other wished to resolve into airy generalities and lofty assumptions ; and in reality, Mr. Fox succeeded as far as it was possible with so disingenuous and artful an opponent, and with the prejudices of his hearers against him.

Even those on the ministerial side confessed that Mr. Fox often convinced them while he spoke, by his forcible and manly appeals, till Mr. Pitt rose and clouded over their apprehensions again with a flimsy arrangement of stately but undefined topics.

Mr. Fox on his accession to office on the death of his predecessor, had a difficult task to perform—neither to forfeit his popularity nor to offend power. He had hardly nerve for both. His virtue was more owing to constitution than principle; and though an honest man, he was not incorruptible. He had a great deal of goodnature in his composition, and good-natured men are seldom qualified to be martyrs. He was a patriot, but liable to be led away by the weaknesses of party or friendship; he was a friend to truth and freedom, but his very impatience of the least wrong might make him a dangerous auxiliary to those who wished to bring about the greatest. There is no medium in such cases, except for the lookers-on; and if he did not take a decided part against the government, he must go all lengths with it. His life was deficient in three great points, the beginning, the middle, and the end. He had set out a Tory and went over to Opposition from some juvenile pique against Lord North: he then coalesced with Lord Shelburne, and lastly with Lord Grenville, whose well-known principles and influence could hardly leave him master of his own opinions. Several circumstances concur to indicate that he came into office with a determination to remain in it, such as his tone of reprimand to those who complained of some abuses of ministerial influence (which he had been doing nearly all his life) and the quackery of such professions as that “if he were an artist and could paint, there were no colours he could use black enough to depict the baseness of Buonaparte’s conduct to Prussia”—as if Prussia had been the most innocent creature breathing. He however (to his eternal honour be it spoken) redeemed while in office one of the

great pledges of humanity, by abolishing the Slave-trade. While he held the reins, hopes also continued to be entertained of peace, and Buonaparte, with Talleyrand to assist him, strained every nerve to urge it forward, first by an overture through Lord Yarmouth and then in the conferences with Lord Lauderdale, who was commissioned to go over to Paris—but at his death things reverted into their old and natural course (as it seemed, unless when some severe constraint was put upon the inclinations of the King and his ministers) and a new coalition was in the field before the end of the year, which had witnessed the dissolution of the last. This time it was Prussia and Russia that were leagued against France, and England as usual that was to pay the cost.

During the late conferences, Buonaparte had endeavoured to bribe the English government to peace by offering to restore Hanover. This was resented as a deep indignity by Prussia, though she professedly held Hanover only as a pledge *ad interim*, and by her double-dealing with both parties, gave each a right to make her the scape-goat. When the conferences were broken off, however, this project fell to the ground; but Prussia, though she kept Hanover, also kept her ill-humour. This did not prevent a cordial union and a thorough good understanding shortly after between England and Prussia; for there are stronger ties between princes than mere interest or territory—mutual hatred of the unauthorised intruders on their power. Prussia indeed stood in an awkward situation, and was bound to do something to recover her character. She had neither the pride of success nor the dignity of misfortune. Her hand had been arrested, as she had prepared to strike an insidious blow: she had followed the war hitherto only as a sutler to pick up what she could get; and from the mercenary, she had to pass suddenly to the chivalrous and heroic part. Perhaps some disjointed recollections of manifestos and marches in the year 1792

haunted her dreams ; nor was that old wound well healed. There was a great deal of ill-blood from a sense of provocation given, but without any blow struck : the ferment became extreme throughout the country, and assumed a very melodramatic appearance indeed. It was reported from Paris that France held Prussia cheap, and this gave birth to the most tragic scenes of loyalty and patriotism. The example of Frederic the Great was held up to the imitation of the king, and he was reminded of the battle of Rossbach. The queen and Prince Louis of Prussia did all they could to fan the flame. Letters were circulated filled with invectives against the French. It was said that the Prussian cavalry had sharpened their sabres on the threshold of the French ambassador. Some young men at Berlin had indeed thrown stones at his windows ; and there was no insult or offensive allusion of which he had not been made the object.

In the meantime, the war party at Paris were not idle in fomenting the quarrel. They were exceedingly pleased at the rupture of the negotiations with England. Murat, whose new honours had turned his head, was the leader of this party, and let slip no opportunity of instigating Buonaparte to war, and of giving him an unfavourable opinion of Talleyrand and all those who inclined to peace. This minister (whose sagacity was not far behind his want of principle) contended that the Emperor's power could only be consolidated by peace, and that " all his victories could only be designated by an algebraic series, of which the first term was *a* and the last *y* or zero." The Grand-Duke of Berg, on the contrary, was for carrying things with a high hand, and thought he had nothing to do but to march from battle to battle, from possession to possession, like the leader of a band of Condottieri, consulting only his arrogance and his personal prowess, his plume of feathers and his sword being the only ideas in his head. Having been just created Grand-Duke of Berg, he intimated his design

of taking possession of the three abbeys of Etten, Essen, and Werden, in the county of Marck. The Prussians resisted ; high words passed, and a few musket-shots were exchanged. The Princess Caroline also, not satisfied with her husband's good fortune or her brother's renown, wished, with the petulance belonging to her sex and youth, to make conquests of her own, and to fire the ambition of all those who had to endure her caprices. There soon appeared on the scene, therefore, a troop of young admiring courtiers, eager to march to new fields of glory, and to humble still more the insolent pretensions of the clownish Prussians before the accomplished cavaliers of the saloons of Paris. Thus the desire of place and distinction, the moment it is attained, uses its power only for its own private gratification, and plays the game of vanity or interest with equal temerity and forgetfulness. There is something, too, in the tone of French assumption and defiance peculiarly offensive to other nations. We can bear pride in a superior, for there is something serious and dignified in it; but self-conceit (to those in misfortune) jars through every fibre of the frame. French impertinence has perhaps done more than the horrors of the Revolution, or Buonaparte's strides to power, to rivet the chains of Europe. It was that air of making light of their enemies, which whetted so many daggers against them, more than any other given cause, and which till they get rid of it (which they will do when they get rid of the air they breathe) will never allow them to be respected in adversity, nor safe in the lap of conquest. Buonaparte was as little swayed as possible by these petty cabals and idle boastings, or by anything but the necessity of the case or his own views of policy ; but they had a tendency to inflame the irritation between the two countries, and to precipitate the war. The ultimatum of the cabinet of Berlin was a challenge rather than an expostulation ; and Berthier wrote from Munich to express his apprehensions that

the Prussians would commence hostilities, without any previous declaration, as had been done in 1805.

The Emperor quitted Paris on the 21st of September 1806; to which he had returned on the 26th of the preceding January. The Empress accompanied him as far as Mentz. The imperial guard, which had returned to Paris after the battle of Austerlitz (and where Buonaparte in his simplicity had promised they should stay in future), once more began its march. Orders were sent to Strasburg for embarking on the Rhine all the troops from that fortress and the neighbourhood, and to Holland to direct that the Dutch army should without delay enter Munster and advance towards the Weser. After receiving the visits of several German princes, the Emperor continued his journey through Aschaffenburg to Wurtzburg, where he arrived on the evening of the same day on which he left Mentz. He stopped at the palace of the grand duke, and here he awaited news of the enemy. The different corps of the French army were assembled at their respective positions, and approached the frontiers of Saxony. This was the first error of the Prussians, who having the start in point of time ought to have attacked the scattered corps of the French before they had time to effect a concentration of their force; or at least have come to dispute the more difficult passages of the Oder and the Elbe with them; instead of which (as men not knowing what to do) they remained motionless at their positions at Erfurt and Weimar, suffering the invading army to debouch by Saalfeld, where Marshal Lannes defeated the corps of Prince Louis of Prussia, who was killed in the action. The Emperor himself marched by the valley of the Maine, having with him the corps of Bernadotte and Ney, and being flanked on his right by Soult and Davoust. Having passed the Saale at Saalburg, he learned the day after that the enemy had abandoned his position at Erfurt, and was coming to the Saale to meet him. He also

learned from a Saxon convoy that part of the Prussians were gone to Naumburg, and, from the letters captured at the post-office at Gera, that another part was still at Weimar. The Emperor then formed his resolution, which was to march on Jena with the corps of Lannes, Ney and Soult; the rest of the army he ordered to continue its march on Naumburg and to attack the enemy if they were found at Weimar. By this movement the Emperor turned the Prussian army, having arrived by a road which they should have taken to meet him, while they were advancing to force the passage of the Saale by a road into which they should have driven the French, had they manœuvred with more skill. On the 13th of October, a little before sunset, the Emperor arrived at Jena, with Marshal Lannes and the foot-guards. He was near Marshals Soult and Ney, whom he ordered to join him. Bernadotte, Davoust, and the Grand-Duke of Berg had on their part also arrived at Naumburg.

## CHAPTER XXXVII.

## BATTLE OF JENA AND ENTRANCE INTO BERLIN.

Battle of Jena ; misconduct of Bernadotte ; Davoust defeats the Prussians ; death of the Duke of Brunswick ; Napoleon's treatment of the Saxon prisoners ; Spandau surrenders ; Napoleon reaches Potsdam ; enters Berlin ; corps under Prince Hohenlohe and Blucher capitulate ; arrest of the Prince of Hatzfeld ; the Princess obtains his pardon from the Emperor ; Custrin, Stettin, and Magdeburg given up ; Prussia refuses an armistice ; arrival of a deputation from the French senate at Berlin ; surrender of Hameln and Nieuberg ; Buonaparte's mode of life with the army.

THE Emperor had sent forward from Gera one of his orderly officers, M. Eugene Montesquieu, as the bearer of a letter to the king of Prussia, which he gave into the hands of the first Prussian troops whom he encountered about a league above Jena. On entering Jena, the French had certain news of the Prussian army. It had left Weimar in two great corps ; the largest, under the immediate command of the king and of the Duke of Brunswick, had taken the road from Weimar to Naumburg ; the other, under the orders of the Prince of Hohenlohe, had directed its march on Jena. In fact, the advanced-guard of the French had no sooner reached the summit of the hill which looks back upon Jena, than they discovered the enemy's line almost in front of them. The Emperor alighted from his horse and went to reconnoitre. The sun had not quite set ; and he advanced till some musket-shots were fired at him. He returned to hasten the march of the columns to their positions, which he recommended to the generals not to take up till it

was dark. He slept in the bivouac amidst the troops, having made all the generals sup with him. Before he lay down to sleep, he descended the hill towards Jena on foot to see that nothing was left behind, when to his surprise he found the whole of Marshal Lannes' artillery which was to begin the fight next day, sticking fast in a ravine which in the obscurity of the night had been mistaken for a road. He was exceedingly vexed ; but instead of wasting time in reproaches, he set to work himself to do the duty of an artillery-officer. He collected the men, made them take their park-tools, and light the lanterns, one of which he held himself, for the convenience of those whose labours he directed. In this manner the ravine was sufficiently widened, and the extremities of the axle-trees cleared of the rocks. The Emperor did not leave the spot till the first waggon had passed through, which was late at night. He did not return to his bivouac till he had issued fresh orders. There was a hoar frost upon the ground, accompanied with fog, which prevented the dense masses of the French troops, crowded together on the top of the hill, from being distinguished by the enemy, or they might have annoyed them with their fire.

The French were under arms by daybreak ; but the fog was still so thick, that advancing towards the enemy on an open ground in front, they missed their way, and came upon a wood where the Prussian left was posted. At nine, the fog cleared up, the sun shone out, the two armies found themselves close together, and the cannonade commenced in the centre, with the greatest sharpness on the Prussian side. Ney, who was on the right of Marshal Lannes, attacked the extreme left of the Prussians, repeatedly taking and being driven from a village where it was lodged ; and would have lost a great number of his men, had not a division of Soult's coming up at the time (although fatigued after a long march) joined in the action, turned the Prussian left, and compelled them to

evacuate the village. The Emperor blamed Ney, though gently, for persisting in his attack, instead of waiting for the expected reinforcement. While this movement was operating on their left, Marshal Lannes made a vigorous attack on the Prussian centre. The boldness of this advance made them shift their whole position. The action then recommenced, and a new incident decided the fortune of the day. The Emperor had left Marshal Augereau at Mentz to collect the regiments which had been sent back from Austerlitz to France, and to follow with what haste he could. He made such good speed that he arrived at Jena while the battle was going on. He did not pause a moment, but advanced through a fir wood in such a manner as to appear in the rear of the Prussian right, at the instant that Lannes was attacking it in front, commencing a discharge of musketry before the Prussians had time to reconnoitre. Buonaparte's columns seemed to meet together at the scene of action as we sometimes see the clouds assembling from the different points of heaven before a thunder storm. This attack being as determined as it was unexpected made the enemy's line waver. The Emperor had but few cavalry with him, the main body being on the road to Naumburg; but as soon as the oscillation was observed in the Prussian ranks, they were sent forward, and ordered to charge with desperation. This movement succeeded in preventing the Prussian army from rallying; and the head of Murat's cavalry just then coming up completed the disorder, and united with the rest in pursuing the routed enemy on the road to Weimar, along which they were escaping.

The Emperor from the spot where he stood, saw the flight of the Prussians, and the French cavalry taking them by thousands. Night was approaching; and here, as at Austerlitz, he rode round the field of battle. He often alighted from his horse to give a little brandy to the wounded; or placed his hand on

the breast of a soldier to feel if his heart beat, or there was any chance of life. His joy on such occasions was only checked by the recollection of those he could not succour. If he found a greater number of dead in one part of the field than another, he looked at the buttons to ascertain the number of the regiment ; and afterwards at the first review he would question the men as to the manner in which they had been attacked, and how the loss had happened. He returned to pass the night at Jena, where he received the professors of the university, and rewarded the vicar of that place for the attention he had shown to the sick and wounded.

On the same day (the 14th of October) on which Napoleon overthrew the Prince of Hohenlohe in front of Jena, Davoust and Bernadotte, in pursuance of their instructions, marched from Naumburg by the Weimar road, on which the Prussian army, under the command of the king, was advancing. Davoust was in a great measure ignorant of the position of the enemy, but he had no sooner reached the summit of the hill, which it is necessary to ascend after passing the stone bridge over the Saale, about a league from Naumburg, than he descried the Prussian army below. He immediately dispatched a messenger to Bernadotte, who was close behind him, and requested he would support him. Bernadotte insisted on taking the lead ; and this not being acceded to by the other, contrived not to act at all, pretending to be in search of a passage somewhere higher up the river. Marshal Davoust attacked with an inferiority in numbers of one to four. Scarcely was his line formed when he was assailed by a cannonade and discharge of musketry, which were the more furiously maintained, as the enemy thought they were sure of destroying him : had it not been for his great courage and firmness under fire, his troops must have been completely disheartened. By three o'clock in the afternoon he had lost one-third of his force. He could only retain

his men in the field by showing himself everywhere. In vain his aides-de-camp hurried to and fro to Bernadotte to urge him to move : he spent the whole day in seeking a passage where none was to be found, and would thus have allowed Davoust to be crushed. He also contrived to keep back the cavalry, over which he had no right of control. Davoust was indebted to his great valour and to the confidence placed in him by his troops, for the glory he won on this day, which was to him the most honourable that could be. Notwithstanding the loss which he sustained, he took from the enemy seventy pieces of cannon, and compelled him to a retreat. Had he been supported by a body of cavalry, he might have taken a great number of prisoners ; but that he had been able to keep the field under such disadvantages, obtained him the admiration of the whole army. The loss of the Prussians was considerable. The Duke of Brunswick, who was wounded, hastily retired to Altona, where he soon after died. The king on learning what had befallen the duke, made a movement to regain the Oder ; nor could Davoust, from the want of cavalry, obstruct the monarch's retreat. Adjutant-general Romœuf, who brought the report of the affair to the Emperor at Jena, said nothing of the absence of the cavalry nor of Bernadotte's refusal to participate in the action. When he had done, Buonaparte asked him what those troops had been doing during the conflict. Receiving no explanation, he bit his lips, and was at no loss to understand that something was amiss. Yet after this he made this man a sovereign. It would seem that as the world goes, magnanimity contains the seeds of its destruction in its own bosom.

Prisoners poured into Jena the whole of the night ; and among them was almost the whole of the Saxon infantry with several generals. The Emperor had the officers assembled in a hall of the university, and thus addressed them by his interpreter : " Saxons ! I am not your enemy, nor the enemy of your Elector.

I know that he has been obliged to aid the designs of Prussia. You have fought, and ill fortune has deprived you of your liberty. If you have sincerely espoused the interests of Prussia, you must share her fate ; but if you can assure me that your sovereign has been constrained to take up arms against me, and that he will seize this opportunity of resuming his natural policy, I will overlook the past, and will henceforth live on friendly terms with him." M. Pfuhl, a Saxon officer, undertook to go to Dresden with this proposal, and to bring an answer in two days ; and on receiving an assurance that it would be favourable, Buonaparte gave the Saxon prisoners their liberty, who immediately set out home by way of Leipsic. The Emperor then departed in an open carriage for Weimar ; and at the top of the mountain, called the Snail, met a Prussian officer bearing a letter from the king with a proposal for an armistice. This offer was not complied with, because its only object was to remove the war from his own dominions into those of the allies of the French. Either from the date of the king's letter, or by some other means, the French general learned the situation of the Prussian army, and directly ordered Bernadotte to force the passage of the Essen, defended by the Prince of Wurtemberg, and made Lannes march upon Erfurt where the Prince of Orange commanded, which shortly after capitulated with a garrison of eighteen thousand men. This town was also of importance, as it was a thoroughfare from the army to Mentz. While at Weimar, the Emperor had an interview with the Prussian general, Schmettau, an old aide-de-camp of Frederic II. who had been wounded in the late battle, and died in consequence soon after.

At Naumburg Buonaparte learned from Davoust (with whom he expressed his high satisfaction) the whole extent of Bernadotte's misconduct just before. He said, "If I were to bring him to a court-martial, it would be equivalent to ordering him to be shot.

The best way is to overlook it. I do not think him so devoid of honour as not to feel the shamefulness of his behaviour, respecting which I shall not fail to let him know my mind." Buonaparte could hardly have been a physiognomist to trust Bernadotte twice ; for he must have seen him with stealthy eyes looking over his high arched nose, watching his own opportunities, and equally indifferent to principle or sentiment ! On the road between Naumburg and Halle, the Emperor passed over the field of Rosbach. He knew the ground so well that on approaching Rosbach, he said to one of his aide-de-camps, pointing with his hand, " Gallop on in that direction, and half a league off you will see the column which the Prussians erected in commemoration of their victory over us." When the whole of Europe was spread out in this manner before Napoleon as in a map, it is not surprising he thought he could lay his hands on it so easily. The column was where he had pointed it out, but no higher than a common-sized door-post ; and the next thing was to order up some of Suchet's sappers to have it conveyed on carriages to Paris. The whole army was now approaching the Elbe. The bridge at Dessau had been burnt by the Prince of Wurtemberg, whom Bernadotte was pursuing. The Emperor thought it possible to repair it ; but finding it would be a work of time, preferred crossing at Wittenberg, by which a day was lost.

Half-way between Dessau and Wittenberg, Duroc, who had been sent on a secret mission to the King of Prussia, came to meet the Emperor. The latter remained at Wittenberg two days, while the French effected the passage of the Elbe ; which they did before the Prussians. Ney was charged with the blockade of Magdeburg. Napoleon with the rest of the army advanced towards Berlin by the Potsdam road, in order to dispute the passage of the Spree with the enemy, who were one or two marches behind. It was about one in the afternoon when the

army left Wittenberg ; and in passing through the suburbs, a storm of hail came on. The Emperor alighted to obtain shelter, and entered a house belonging to the keeper of the forests. He thought he was not known ; and regarded merely as ordinary civility the respectful manner in which he was received by two young women in the apartment where he was. They appeared much surprised and embarrassed, and one of them exclaimed aside, “Heavens ! it is the Emperor.” On inquiry, it turned out that she was the widow of an officer who had been killed in Egypt, and that she recollects Buonaparte perfectly well, as he was not much altered, as well as General Savary and General Berthier, who were with him. She had been left with one son ; and in answer to a question put to her on the subject, she ran upstairs and brought down her marriage contract. The Emperor was much pleased, and exclaimed, “*Par Dieu !* this is a curious meeting.” He then ordered Berthier to take down the names both of the mother and the son. The storm being now over and the Emperor about to depart, he said, “Well, madam, as a memorial of this day, I grant you an annual pension of 1200 francs, with the reversion to your son.” He then mounted his horse and set off ; and in the evening signed the order for the widow’s pension.

Napoleon passed the night within a short march of Potsdam. He here learned that the Prussians had recrossed the Elbe, and were making every exertion to regain the Oder towards Stettin. He ordered Soult and Bernadotte to give them no rest. Ney remained on the left bank of the Elbe to watch Magdeburg, and to see that the enemy, pressed hard by Soult and Bernadotte, did not turn short that way. Spandau surrendered to Marshal Lannes at the first summons ; so that his corps being left disposable, was sent forward to the other side of the Spree. The Emperor arrived at Potsdam in broad day, and went immediately to visit the two palaces of Sans-Souci.

He admired the beauty of the larger palace, and made some remarks on the site chosen for it, which is so bleak and ungenial, that the growth of everything is stunted. The little palace of Sans-Souci greatly interested him. He examined the apartment of Frederick the Great, which is kept with religious care. None of the furniture had been displaced ; and certainly splendour constituted no part of its value. The writing-table resembled those which may yet be seen in the offices of the old French notaries : the inkstand and pens were still upon it. Buonaparte opened several of the books which Frederick was fond of reading, and which contained marginal notes in the king's own hand, apparently written in no very good humour. He ordered the door to be opened by which Frederick used to go down to the terrace in the garden, and also that which he passed through, when he went to review his troops on the great sandy plain near the palace. Everything about this monarch appears to have been dry and arid. He returned to Potsdam for the night, where he forbade any one to occupy the private apartments belonging to the queen. At Charlottenburg they found in a drawer in one of her dressing-rooms a memorial drawn up by Dumouriez for subduing the power of France. Certainly, there is no containing the mercurial vivacity of the French character within given bounds, except by mixing it up with the *caput mortuum* of legitimacy !

On the 21st of October, a month after his departure from Paris, Buonaparte entered Berlin. He was on horseback, accompanied by the guard and the whole of Davoust's corps, whom he chose to be the first to enter the Prussian capital. The weather was fine. Almost all the inhabitants of the city seemed to be out of doors ; and the windows were filled with ladies, who, though they evinced considerable curiosity on the occasion, yet expressed the profoundest grief in their countenances, and many were bathed in tears.

Pride, passion, patriotism, loyalty, all are human, and have tears for their dearest loss : truth and freedom alone see theirs with dry eyes ! The Emperor alighted at the king's palace, where he took up his abode. The troops were stationed on the Custrin and Stettin roads, with the exception of the guard, which was quartered in Berlin. Buonaparte was up at four in the morning, sending out scouts and parties of skirmishers in every direction. One of these parties captured a flag of truce, from whom it was discovered that he had left Prince Hohenlohe at New-Rupin preparing to depart for Prentzlau, on which the Emperor directed the dragoons and the corps of Lannes to proceed thither by forced marches up the Havel. They reached the bridge at Prentzlau a few hours before the head of the Prussian column appeared on the opposite bank of the river, both sides being very much fatigued, a parley ensued. The Prussian troop which was most in advance was a regiment belonging to the king's-guard, which, supposing all lost, was very glad to return to Berlin. An arrangement was proposed and concluded on the spot. Prince Hohenlohe surrendered with all the troops that were with him, transferring to General Blucher the command of those which were too distant to be included in the capitulation. The others were sent back to Berlin. Prince Charles of Mecklenburg, a younger brother of the queen, having been taken prisoner at Strelitz, was dismissed on his parole. Blucher had rallied the wrecks of the Prince of Hohenlohe's corps, and added them to what remained of the army that fought against Davoust. The king had withdrawn from this army as soon as the armistice had been refused. He took Magdeburg on his way to Berlin, and thence directed his course to the Oder and afterwards to Graudentz, where he ordered the bridge of boats over the Vistula to be removed. He here learnt the surrender of his army at Lubeck. Blucher had manœuvred so as to draw Soult and Bernadotte from Berlin ; and afterwards

succeeded in giving them the slip from the field of Wharen. He escaped from them so completely that they did not reach till evening the positions he had quitted in the morning. He passed through Schwerin and gained Lubeck. He would have defended the bridge of that place, but was overpowered. Driven to the last extremity, and destitute of ammunition, he at last capitulated, and surrendered his troops prisoners of war.

On the arrival of the French at Berlin, possession was immediately taken of the post-office. The examination of the intercepted correspondence was so skilfully managed that at first no suspicion was entertained of the circumstance. In this way, a letter forwarded to the care of the postmaster and addressed to the king, was stopped. This letter was written and signed by the Prince of Hatzfield, who had remained at Berlin. It contained a detailed account of everything which had occurred in the capital since the king's departure, with a minute description of the French force, corps by corps. As the letter was written by a prince, it was laid before the Emperor, who appointed a court-martial to be held to try the writer on a charge of giving secret information to the Prussian government. On the order for the court-martial being issued, the prince was arrested. The court-martial met; but as the Emperor had not returned the original letter, the only document on which the charge was founded, an application was made for it through the major-general in the usual way. It so happened that the Emperor had gone to some distance from Berlin to review one of Davoust's divisions. It was another fortunate circumstance that on his return he stopped to pay a visit to the old Prince Ferdinand, brother to Frederic II., so that it was late before he got home. These lucky incidents afforded the Princess of Hatzfield time to see Marshal Duroc, whom she had known during his former visits to Berlin. The marshal knew nothing of the busi-

ness, and not being able to leave the palace, sent General Savary to learn the particulars. He hastened back to inform Marshal Duroc, that the life of the prince was at stake, and that it was necessary to procure the princess an immediate audience of the Emperor. He had just then returned, and meeting Duroc at the top of the staircase with the princess (who had never quitted the spot) holding by his arm, he said, "What! has something new occurred, grandmarshal?"—"Yes, sire," said Duroc, and followed the Emperor into his cabinet. He soon came out, and introduced the princess. She knew not why her husband had been arrested, and in the simplicity of her disposition demanded justice of the Emperor for the wrong which she supposed was done him. When she had finished he handed her the letter written by her husband. Having run it over, she stood motionless, and looked as if she had lost all sensation, but uttered not a word. The Emperor said, "Well, madam, is this a calumny? I leave you to judge." The princess, more dead than alive, was going to answer with her tears, when Buonaparte took the letter from her and said, "Were it not for this letter, there would be no proof against your husband."—"That is very true," she replied, "but I cannot deny that it is his writing."—"Well," said the Emperor, "there is nothing to be done but to burn it," and threw the letter into the fire. The Princess of Hatzfield, knew not what to do or say; but she spoke more feelingly by her silence than the most eloquent orator could have done. She retired quite happy, and soon saw her husband, who was set at liberty. The Emperor, say those who knew him best, was on this day as happy as the Princess of Hatzfield. Such was the man, whose character venal writers laboured to cover with the slime and poison of their pens, in order to sink a cause which he upheld by the sword, and which in itself was unassailable.

Prince Paul of Wurtemberg had joined the Prus-

sians without his father's consent, and was made a general and a prisoner almost at the same instant. Buonaparte took no other revenge of him than not to receive him, and to send him back to Stuttgart. Custrin and Stettin surrendered, as if they had fallen down before a name; and at the same time Magdeburg, with a garrison of twenty-three thousand men, commanded by General Kleist, surrendered to Ney, whose force was not much larger. It was only in Silesia that a Prussian corps kept the field, where it was opposed by Prince Jerome, to whom Buonaparte having been lately reconciled with him had given the command of an army-corps of Bavarians, Wurtemburghers, and other Confederate troops. The diplomatic body now flocked to Berlin in the train of victory, but did little to bring about a peace. M. Talleyrand in particular by a note which he presented (in which he took a lively bird's-eye view of the whole political horizon) offended the King of Prussia by requiring him to do what was not in his power, namely, to compel England and Russia to make peace. As men often grow desperate in desperate circumstances, the more imperious the necessity became for coming to terms with Napoleon, the more he seemed to shrink from it; and when Duroc found him at Osterode, on the other side of the Vistula, he rejected the idea of an armistice altogether, alleging that "it was now too late, and that he had thrown himself into the arms of the Emperor of Russia, who had offered him his support." Buonaparte gave up all further attempts at negotiation, and forthwith put himself into a condition to seek peace wherever he could find the Russians. While at Berlin, the Emperor received a deputation from the French senate, complimenting him on his astonishing success, but recommending him to put a period to his victories by a peace. This vexed him, and he returned for answer that before they recommended him to make peace, they might at least have inquired on which side the

obstacles to it lay, or have sent the means along with the flattering hope of forcing the Prussians or the Russians, with whom the former had now leagued, to conclude it with him. This was the first manifestation of that spirit of idle cavilling, or of what Buonaparte afterwards denounced as the spirit of *ideology*, which began to take a surfeit of success in which it did not play a principal part, and which was looking at abstract principles, when it should have been attending to circumstances, and at circumstances when it should have been guided by abstract principles. The Emperor had sent to Italy for the Polish general, Dombrouski, to join him at Potsdam. It was not till after the refusal of Prussia to sign the armistice, that he thought seriously of creating a diversion in his favour in Poland. Fresh troops arrived from France, with which Marshal Mortier marched against the Hanse-towns, and was master of the shores of the Baltic before the Emperor was ready to commence operations in Lithuania. The two remaining fortresses of Hameln and Nieuburg also fell into the hands of the French by a kind of giddiness or vertigo, by which strong places at this time took it into their heads to surrender almost at discretion, and without striking a single blow. The commanders have been accused of treachery and collusion, without attending to the effect which a general panic and course of disaster has on the mind. A great authority has said, "Men's judgments are a parcel of their fortunes;" and the example of cities surrendering, armies beaten, and king's flying from their capitals, might relax the sinews of war into a very ague-fit, even in a veteran soldier, without the imputation of bribery, indifference, or premeditated treachery. Cowardice is epidemic as well as courage; and the spark of patriotism is either kindled or extinguished by common consent. In Hameln were found fifteen stand of colours embroidered by the fairest hands that Prussia could boast, adorned with

martial emblems, and presented to their lovers in the hope of a different fate. Have the women in France no embroidering frames? Neither lovers nor a country?

Buonaparte was on this occasion longer absent from Paris than on any other since his return from Egypt (being detained by the two campaigns, first with Prussia in 1806 and then with Russia in 1807)—and it may not be an improper place to describe his manner of life when with the army. It was simple and without show. Every individual, of whatever rank, had permission to approach and speak to him of his affairs. He listened, questioned, and gave an answer on the spot: if it was a refusal, there was a reason assigned for it, and it was done in a way to soften the pain of a denial. It was a spectacle to excite the highest admiration to see the common soldier quit the ranks, when his regiment was drawn out before the Emperor, and advancing with a grave measured step, and presenting arms, come close up to him. Napoleon never failed to take his petition, read it through, and grant its just demands. This noble privilege which he afforded to fidelity and courage gave each soldier a strong sense of his rights and of his duties, while it served as a curb to check the humours of the superior officers who might be tempted to abuse their trust. The simplicity of the manners and character of the Emperor was chiefly remarkable on those marching-days when the cannon were for a short time silent. Constantly on horseback in the midst of his generals and of his aide-de-camps, of the officers of his household, or of the youthful and valiant *elite* of the officers of artillery, his gaiety and good-humour had an influence on all around him. Often he gave directions to halt, and would seat himself under a tree by the roadside with the Prince of Neufchâtel. The provisions for the march were spread out before him; and every one, from the page to the highest officers, found by one means or other what was necessary for his refreshment. It was a sort of

*fête* for the whole party. Napoleon by banishing from his private concerns any shadow of intrigue, and by judging always for himself, had inspired all those belonging to him with sentiments of affection, of union, and zeal in his service which rendered their intercourse extremely agreeable. Such was the frugality of Napoleon that he gave the preference, by choice, to the simplest viands and to those which were least highly seasoned—as for example: eggs *au miroir*, beans dressed as a salad. Either of these two dishes, with a small quantity of Parmesan cheese, was what his breakfast generally consisted of. At dinner he ate little, seldom tasting made-dishes, and always choosing the wholesomest. He used to repeat that “however small a quantity of food we took, we always took more than enough.” By this means, his head was always clear, and his work easy to him, even after rising from table. Gifted by nature with a sound and excellent stomach, his nights were calm as those of an infant; and his constitution agreed so well with his situation, that a single hour of sleep repaired the exhaustion occasioned by four-and-twenty hours of fatigue. In the midst of emergencies the most critical and urgent, he had the power of going to sleep voluntarily; and his mind recovered the most perfect calm, from the instant that the measures which the actual circumstances required were determined on. All the hours of the day were devoted to employment, even when he was with the army. Did he cease for a moment to consult his maps, to meditate the plan of his battles, and to study the immense combinations which it was necessary to arrange in order to put in motion (with mathematical precision) masses of four or five hundred thousand men, then he busied himself with the interior administration of the Empire. Several times in the week an auditor from the council of state arrived at head-quarters, charged with the portfolios of the different ministers: never was the labour deferred till the morrow; in the course of the

same day the whole was examined, signed, and sent off: everything marched abreast. The days that followed a battle were devoted to receiving the reports of the different corps of the army, connecting together the detached circumstances, allotting to every one the share of glory to which he was entitled, and drawing up those masterly bulletins which are a model of military eloquence. It was singular enough that these bulletins, sent to Paris to be published, were read and admired by all France, before they reached the army, who knew nothing of their contents till the arrival of the newspapers from the capital. They have been accused of exaggeration: but events sufficiently proved their truth. Armies do not fly nor cities fall down before the columns of a gazette. The personalities against the Queen of Prussia have been complained of as showing a want of gallantry; but the provocation was extreme, and the opportunity not to be missed for paying off the abuse and contumely of which Buonaparte was himself the unceasing butt for twenty years. Still it would have been better, had he abstained from recriminating, in a moment of victory, on a woman and a queen—a handsome and a spirited one too; but perhaps the air of the palaces of Potsdam and Berlin was not very favourable to sentiments of gallantry.

## CHAPTER XXXVIII.

BATTLES OF EYLAU AND FRIEDLAND, AND PEACE  
OF TILSIT.

Issuing of the orders in council against English commerce ; their policy considered ; Hamburg occupied by Mortier ; kingdom of Westphalia created ; Napoleon's treatment of the Duke of Brunswick justified ; a new French levy ; advance of Benigsen ; Napoleon enters Poland ; feeling of the Poles towards him ; Warsaw fortified by the French ; Kaminskoi takes the command of the Russians ; is defeated at Pultusk ; battle of Eylau ; the king of Prussia again rejects overtures of peace ; fall of Dantzig ; battle of Heilsberg ; battle of Friedland ; peace of Tilsit ; terms of the treaty ; Napoleon returns to France.

IT was from Berlin that Buonaparte dated the famous decrees of the 21st of November, 1806, interdicting all commerce between Great Britain and the rest of Europe, which was the commencement of the well-known Continental System, which he resorted to as the only means of crushing the power and hostility of England, and the attempt to enforce which (almost as it were against the nature of things) in the end proved fatal to himself. Buonaparte reasoned in this manner with himself—that it was incumbent on him to destroy the power and influence of Great Britain—that there was no other way of doing it but by excluding her completely from the ports of the continent—and that therefore this was the means to which it was necessary to have recourse in order to arrive at that indispensable object. But nothing is necessary in human affairs that is not possible ; and to attempt a remedy for that which is placed out of our reach by fortune, is only to *make bad worse*. Nothing could

alter the moral condition of England but the striking at her physical resources ; and these from her insular situation were invulnerable in the ordinary course of events. *There*, however, England was in the map ; and there let her remain to do all the mischief she could ! If his armies could not march across the sea, neither could her fleets come upon the land. This was enough : anything beyond was will, not reason. If he could get all the states of Europe to come into his system, and only one held out, that would be sufficient to defeat it ; if they all could be prevailed on to come into it (which would be difficult considering the privations and losses it must occasion) would they all keep to it ? Even if this were the case with the governments, no advance would be made towards the grand object : a single harbour, a smuggler's cave, a creek, a crevice would serve to let in so subtle a thing as commerce, just as the smallest leak lets the water into the hold of a vessel. The means were disproportioned to the end. The whole power and resources of France must be strained to their utmost pitch, and called forth not against an imposing mass and once for all, but must be brought to bear at every moment, and in every point of the compass, against the most petty, harassing, and evanescent opposition. After throwing the net of his policy and the ramifications of his vast system of restraint and exclusion over the lion of British commerce, a mouse, a Norway rat would bite the cords in two. It was only his immense influence, his prodigious energy, and a resolution steeled against remonstrance or disappointment, that could have made his scheme at all feasible or formidable to others : yet, in spite of these, it failed. Nothing short of absolute power could have carried it into practical effect ; and with respect to moral or political causes, absolute power is a mere name. As to the complaints urged by the French ruler against the encroachments, the insolence, and rapacity of England as a maritime power, nothing could be more just ; but they need

not have excited any surprise, except in contrast with the high character which we give of ourselves, and which makes others a little sore and impatient when they find out the truth. On the other hand, with respect to the inconsistencies between the maritime and military codes of warfare, though glaring and revolting, they seem in a great measure to arise out of the nature of the service itself (the one having to do with fixed masses, the other with floating fragments) though not altogether so. Thus there seems no reason why a merchant vessel in an enemy's harbour should be confiscated the instant war is declared, while a convoy of merchandise by land is suffered to go free and return to enrich that very enemy. The property here is not fixed and at any time accessible, but moveable, as in the other case. Again, if the property of the private citizen at sea is made lawful spoil, as the only means which the stronger party has of gaining an advantage over the weaker, yet there is no reason why the unarmed citizen should be made prisoner in his own person, which can only be prejudicial to himself, except under the idea of his being held to ransom, according to the obsolete custom of barbarous warfare. If it be with a view to exchange the peaceful prisoner with the soldier taken in battle, then there is the same ground for detaining travellers in a country, or others whom we have in our power, to increase the number of hostages. There is no doubt that the state of the maritime code (which either for good or bad reasons approaches nearer the usages of barbarous times than the military) might admit of revision and amelioration in many respects; and if Buonaparte may be supposed from circumstances or peculiar irritation to have taken a prejudiced view of the subject, we can hardly set ourselves up as impartial judges of the question.

Hamburg was the first place that felt by anticipation the blow that was about to be aimed at British commerce. Marshal Mortier, towards the middle of

November, formally re-occupied Hanover ; and, marching upon Hamburg, took possession of that ancient free-town, so long the emporium of the commerce of the north of Europe. The strictest search was made for British commodities and property, which were declared the lawful subject of confiscation—with what success it is difficult to make out between the outcries of the English merchants at the meditated injury (as if they were the most aggrieved set of people upon earth) and their subsequent boastings of having outwitted their adversaries. Hesse-Cassel was taken from the Elector, who was known to be decidedly hostile to France ; and with various provinces of Prussia and the conquered territories of the Duke of Brunswick was erected into the kingdom of Westphalia, and given to Jerome Buonaparte. Much has been said of Buonaparte's treatment of the Duke of Brunswick, who died about this time at Altona ; and it seems to have been agreed by certain writers that the French bullets ought to have spared him ; first, because he was the father-in-law of the heir-apparent of the British crown ; and secondly, as being the author of the memorable manifesto against the French nation in the year 1792. On the contrary, if there was any one reproach, any one indignity, more gallin' than another that could be heaped upon his tomb or on his deathbed, that one ought to have been heaped upon it. Oh no ! let not the outrage and contumey be all on one side—the forgiveness and forbearance all on the other. What ! we are to be treated wth the cold, defecated malice of fiends, and we are to return it with nothing but the milk of human kindness and the pitying smiles of angels. Those who have cherished but one feeling all their lives, that of hnting down the liberties and happiness of mankind, cannot come with their latest breath to beg a little charity and mercy. To give no quarter to human nature is to expect none from it. But his son never forgave his father's death, and revenged it b' the

Black Brunswickers in 1815. But *his* father was not the only one by many millions who fell victims in that ruthless struggle which the Duke of Brunswick's manifesto proclaimed to the world, and to the spirit that animated it. Buonaparte is blamed for having alluded to this. He would have been a dastard if he had not. So 1806 was to be paid home, but 1792 forgotten. There is no equality in that. Let the circle of revenge go round: only let it be understood that the hatred is reciprocal, deadly, and implacable on both sides!

Buonaparte had a fine opportunity at this time of rebutting the odium and cavils to which he exposed himself by his treatment of the petty princes of Germany, and of establishing his popularity, had he made common cause with Poland. That name "pleaded trumpet-tongued" against the iniquity of the old governments of Europe, and laughed to scorn all their affected appeals to moderation and justice. A light went before it, a flame followed after it; from which Buonaparte shrunk, as the one pointed out and the other embraced consequences of which he could hardly control the issues. He hesitated to lay his hands on that engine of power which was contained in the degradation and oppression of Poland, and to give it full scope, because though it was a means to crush his antagonists, it might in the end recoil upon himself. Honesty would probably here, as in so many cases, have been the best policy: and the broad principles of liberty and justice the safest ground for him to tread upon. But Buonaparte was fonder of organizing than of emancipating; and even if he had restored to Poland the inheritance of freedom, would have liked to retain the management of it in his own hands. His lukewarmness or circumspection cost him dear; but it was not his most prominent characteristic to trust with implicit faith to those moral tendencies which act by their own spontaneous and expansive force; or in other words, the greatness of

his capacity consisted rather in combining numberless positive means to the same end than in wielding the simplest elements to the production of the most widely-extended results. Besides, he was implicated with Austria on one side, and averse to provoke the lasting enmity of Russia on the other ; and all he did was to erect Prussian Poland into a sort of independence under the title of the Duchy of Warsaw, with the newly-created King of Saxony at its head, and to talk from time to time of the liberation of the Poles.

“The partition of this fine kingdom by its powerful neighbours” (says a great and admired writer, whose testimony in behalf of liberty is the more to be valued as it is rare) “was the first open and audacious transgression of the law of nations which disgraced the annals of civilized Europe. It was executed by a combination of three of the most powerful states of Europe against one too unhappy in the nature of its constitution, and too much divided by factions, to offer any effectual resistance. The kingdom subjected to this aggression had appealed in vain to the code of nations for protection against an outrage, to which, after a desultory and uncombined and therefore a vain defence, she saw herself under a necessity of submitting. The Poles retained too a secret sense of their fruitless attempt to recover freedom in 1791, and an animated recollection of the violence by which it had been suppressed by the Russian arms. They waited with hope and exultation the approach of the French armies ; and candour must allow, that unlawfully subjected as they had been to a foreign yoke, they had a right to avail themselves of the assistance not only of Napoleon, but of Mahomet or of Satan himself, had he proposed to aid them in regaining the independence of which they had been oppressively and unjustly deprived.” This, if not elegant, is full and plain, and goes to prove that if the Poles had a right to call in Buona-

parte for the recovery or maintenance of their independence, the French must at all times have had a still greater right to do so.

Buonaparte had obtained by a decree of the senate in the month of October 1806, a new levy of eighty thousand men ; and was in a condition to push the war with vigour and to a decisive termination. The French, having made themselves masters of the Prussian provinces to the east of the Oder, had laid siege to the fortresses of Glogau, Breslau, and Graudentz, and were advancing to occupy Poland. The Russian general, Benigsen, had on his side come as far as Warsaw in the hope of aiding the Prussians ; but finding that they had scarcely the remnant of an army to bring into the field, he had recrossed the Vistula, leaving the capital of Poland to be entered on the 28th of November by Murat at the head of the French vanguard. About the same time, Napoleon, leaving Berlin, had fixed his head-quarters at Posen, a centrical town in Poland, which country was beginning to manifest considerable agitation. The Poles in many instances resumed their ancient national dress and manners, and sent deputies to urge the decision of Buonaparte in their favour. The language in which they entreated his interposition, resembled that of Oriental idolatry. "The Polish nation," said Count Radyiminski, the Palatine of Gnesna, "presents itself before your Majesty, groaning still under the German yoke, and hails with the purest joy the regenerator of their beloved country, the legislator of the universe. Full of submission to your will, they offer you their homage, and repose on you with confidence all their hopes, as upon him who has the power of raising empires and of destroying them, and of humbling the proud." The address of the President of the council-chamber of the regency of Poland was equally sanguine and high-flown. "Already," he said, "we see our dear country saved ; for in your person we revere the most just and most pro-

found Solon. We commit our fate and our hopes into your hands ; and we implore the mighty protection of the most august Cæsar." Napoleon received these hyperbolical compliments, which Freedom poured forth in its anguish and in its abject state, with complacency ; but they drew from him no direct or explicit declaration of his final intentions. For my own part, his equivocal and calculating policy with regard to Poland gives me a worse opinion of him than all he did to Spain. The one indicated a want of virtue or of any love for freedom ; the other only showed a contempt for vice and for the dotage of slavery and superstition. The last might be pardonable in the philosopher and the politician ; the first was neither consistent with the character of the philanthropist nor the sage.

Meanwhile, Warsaw was put into a state of defence ; and the auxiliary troops of Saxony and the new confederates of the Rhine were brought up by regular marches, while repeated reinforcements from France repaired the losses of the former part of the campaign. The French army at length advanced in full strength, and crossed successively the Vistula and the Bog. Benigsen, whose object it was not to give battle to numbers superior to his own, retreated behind the Urka, where he was joined by the troops of Generals Buxhowden and Kaminskoi, the latter of whom, a contemporary of Suwarrow, assumed the chief command. On the 25th of December, 1806, the army of Benigsen took up a position behind Pultusk ; their left, commanded by Count Ostermann, resting upon the town which stands on the river Narew, the bridge of which was well defended. The right, under Barclay de Tolly, was strongly posted in a wood ; the centre was under the orders of General Zachen. A plain between the town of Pultusk and the wood was filled with cavalry. On the 26th, the Russian position was attacked by the divisions of Lannes and Davoust, together with all the French guards. After skirmish-

ing for some time, the French assembling in great force on their left, made a determined effort to overwhelm the Russians by turning their right wing. Barclay de Tolly was obliged to fall back on his reserve, while the French seized upon the wood, and took several guns. Benigsen, however, in spite of Kaminskoi's order to retreat, resolved to abide the brunt of the battle ; for which purpose, desiring Barclay de Tolly to continue his retreat, he suffered the French to advance in pursuit, till the cavalry, who had covered the manœuvre, suddenly withdrawing, a battery of a hundred and twenty guns, extending along the whole Russian front, played on the advancing columns of the French. The Russian line now coming forward, occupied the ground from which they had been driven. The approach of night ended the combat, which was both obstinate and bloody. Great numbers were killed on both sides : Marshal Lannes was wounded in the action.

The battle of Pultusk raised the reputation of Benigsen and the spirits of the Russians, who thought it a great thing to have checked the advance of the French. Both Benigsen, however, and Prince Galitzin, who had fought the same day at Golymin, were compelled to unite their forces, and fall back on Ostrolenka, for fear of being surrounded. Kaminskoi, whose conduct had for some time been capricious and unaccountable, now showed evident signs of derangement, and was superseded by Benigsen. This general made a demonstration towards Graudentz and Königsberg, where the King of Prussia was cooped up, and menaced with the gradual approaches of Ney and Bernadotte. He succeeded so far by this diversion as to enable the Prussian general, L'Estocq, to throw reinforcements and provisions into the former place. On the 25th of January, 1807, Buonaparte left his winter-quarters at Warsaw, and collected his army at Willenburg, in the rear of Benigsen's corps, who was then at Mohrungen, watched by Bernadotte on the

other side, to whom Buonaparte had sent orders to bring him to action, and draw him on to the Vistula, thus intending to turn the Russians here, as he had done the Austrians at Ulm, and the Prussians at Jena. Napoleon was advancing close upon the Russian rear, when a dispatch intercepted by a troop of Cossacks betrayed his design; and Benigsen, alarmed in time, fell back precipitately upon Allenstein, which place he evacuated at night to avoid a battle. He then proceeded by Deppen and Landsberg to Preuss-Eylau, where he arrived after various skirmishes on the evening of the 7th of February, and where he waited on the outside of the town to give the French army battle the next day. It was intended by the Russian general to leave a guard to occupy the town; but this having been neglected, it was resolved to send a detachment to drive the French from it, who were come up by this time, and in whose possession, after a severe and doubtful conflict, it remained for the night. Barclay de Tolly was wounded while leading his troops to the assault.

The position of the two armies the next day may be described as follows:—The Russian troops occupied a space of uneven ground, about two miles in length and a mile in depth, with the village of Serpallen on their left: they were in front of the town of Preuss-Eylau, situated in a hollow and in possession of the French. Napoleon had fixed his head-quarters here. Davoust with the third corps had proceeded three leagues to the right to engage a Russian column which was on the Alle, and to turn the left of the enemy's line. The fourth corps bivouacked in advance to the right and left of the town:—the guard in the second line, the seventh corps under Augereau and the reserves of heavy cavalry in the third line. The space between the two armies was open and flat, and intersected with frozen lakes, on which the watch-lights threw their pale gleams the whole of the preceding night. On the following day (the 8th) at daybreak,

the Russians commenced the attack on the French centre, by endeavouring to carry Eylau ; but were repulsed with a dreadful carnage on both sides. The guard maintained its position and kept up an unabated firing during the day. About noon, a heavy storm of snow began to fall, which the wind drove right in the faces of the Russians, and which added to the obscurity caused by the smoke of the burning village of Serpallen. Buonaparte was on the top of the church of Eylau ; and amidst a shower of grape and balls that fell on every side, ordered Augereau to advance with the seventh corps, which it did by taking a diverging direction, and was close upon the enemy before it was perceived, owing to the thickness of the atmosphere. Benigsen brought up his reserves in person to oppose it, when a sanguinary conflict ensued, in which Augereau's troops suffered more that day than all the rest of the army. At this time the third corps, commanded by Davoust, came up (following a Russian column that had retreated fighting all the way from the Alle) and formed nearly at right angles with Benigsen's troops. On the arrival of Davoust, that general commenced his retreat, though in good order, and abandoned the field of battle, which the third corps occupied about five in the evening. Ney was not in the engagement, but about two leagues off, at the village of Sloditten, on the road to Königsberg. Both he and Bernadotte came up in the course of the night, and were ready to have taken part in the battle, had the Russian general been disposed to renew it the next day. A council of war was held to deliberate on the point without dismounting from their horses ; the more sanguine among the leaders, Tolstoy and the Prussian L'Estocq who had come up with reinforcements towards the close of the day, were for attacking the French again on the morrow : but Benigsen did not think himself warranted in risking a second action with an army diminished by twenty thousand men in killed or wounded, short of ammu-

nition and totally destitute of provisions. The Russians accordingly that very night commenced their retreat on Königsberg, where the King of Prussia was. Buonaparte did not move after them: his own loss was enough to give him pause, which he estimates at eighteen thousand men. The Russians had certainly made the utmost resistance that unshrinking hardihood could oppose to skill and valour united. It was a new kind of warfare, and they had shown that they were only to be beaten, by being hewn in pieces like logs of wood. The victor had triumphed over the civilized part of Europe: he had now to consider what obstacles barbarism had in store for him. An army that had the power of inflicting all the mischiefs of war on others, but was utterly insensible to them itself, regarding neither suffering, danger, nor death, must be very formidable; and to this description the Russian troops approached as nearly as could well be desired. This first encounter with them might have taught greater caution: but the reasons for caution, as they thwart the will, are often only motives to temerity. To show that Buonaparte was aware of the new difficulties he had to grapple with in his next battle (that of Friedland) he used all his resources of art and stratagem to secure the advantage to himself before he commenced it.

The battle of Preuss-Eylau was claimed as a victory by both parties, though it was only comparatively that it was not a defeat to the Russians. Buonaparte remained for eight days on the field of battle, in the course of which he dispatched a messenger to the King of Prussia, proposing an armistice on terms more favourable than had been offered after the battle of Jena. But favourable terms were not those to which the sovereigns of Europe were disposed to accede: they could only be compelled to sign the most desperate ones, in circumstances the most desperate. The king therefore remained firm to his ally, the Emperor of Russia; and refusing to listen to any

offers of a separate peace, determined once more to try his fortune to the utmost. On the 19th of February, Napoleon evacuated Preuss-Eylau, and retired upon the Vistula. The first thing he did, preparatory to a new campaign, was to order the siege of Dantzic, from whence very dangerous operations might take place in his rear, should he again advance into Poland without reducing it. The siege was therefore formed without delay. The place was defended by General Kalkreuth to the last extremity. After many unsuccessful attempts to relieve it, Dantzic finally surrendered towards the end of May, 1807, trenches having been opened before it for fifty-two days. This event enabled Buonaparte to unite the besieging troops, twenty-five thousand strong, to his main army, and to prepare, as summer advanced, to resume offensive operations. He also raised the siege of Colberg, drew the greater part of his forces out of Silesia, ordered a new levy in Switzerland, urged the march of bodies of troops from Italy; and to complete his means, demanded a new conscription for the year 1808, which was instantly complied with by the senate. A large levy of Poles was made at the same time; and they, with other light troops of the French, were employed in making bold excursions, often exchanging blows with straggling parties of Cossacks. The Russian army had, in the meantime, received reinforcements, though they were still deficient in numerical force, their whole strength not amounting to more than ninety thousand men; while Buonaparte, by unparalleled exertions, had assembled upwards of two hundred thousand between the Vistula and Memel. This negligence on the part of the Russian government to recruit its force is said to have been owing to the poverty of its finances; and (what is still more remarkable) to the refusal of the British ministry to negotiate a loan of six millions, and advance one million to account, thereby giving great offence to the Emperor Alexander.

The Russians were the assailants, making a combined movement on Ney's division, which was stationed near Gustadt. They pursued him as far as Deppen; but upon the 8th of June, Napoleon advanced in person to extricate his marshal, and Benigsen was obliged to retreat in his turn. As to the share which the Cossacks had in these skirmishes, it was as yet very trifling. The Russian army fell back upon Heilsberg, where, concentrating their force, they made a very desperate stand. A very hard-fought action here took place, the battle continuing till the approach of midnight; and when the morning dawned, the space of ground between the Russian and French lines was not merely strewed, but literally choked up with the bodies of the dead and wounded. The Russians retired unmolested after the battle of Heilsberg; and crossing the river Aller, placed that barrier between them and the army of Buonaparte, which though it had suffered considerable losses, had been less affected by them than the Russian army. On the 13th, Benigsen with his Russians arrived opposite Friedland, a large town on the west side of the Aller, communicating with the eastern or right bank of the river by a long wooden bridge. It was the object of Napoleon to induce the Russian general to pass by this narrow bridge to the left bank, and then to draw him into a general action, in a position where the difficulty of defiling through the town and over the bridge must render retreat almost impracticable. For this purpose he showed such a proportion only of his forces as induced General Benigsen to believe that the French troops consisted chiefly of Oudinot's division, which had been severely handled in the battle of Heilsberg, and which he now hoped altogether to destroy. Under this deception, he ordered a Russian division to pass the bridge, defile through the town, and march to the assault. The French took care to offer no such resistance as should intimate their real strength. Benigsen was thus led to reinforce

the first division with another—the battle thickened, and the Russian general at length transported all his army, one division excepted, to the left bank of the Aller, by means of the wooden bridge and three pontoons, and drew them up in front of the town of Friedland, to overwhelm, as he supposed, the crippled division of the French, to which alone he conceived himself opposed.

But no sooner had he taken this irretrievable step than the mask was dropped. The French skirmishers advanced in force, heavy columns of infantry began to show themselves from a wood that had hitherto concealed them ; batteries of cannon were got into position ; and all circumstances concurred with the report of prisoners to assure Benigsen that he with his enfeebled troops was in presence of the whole French army. His position, a sort of plain, surrounded by woods and rising grounds, was difficult to defend : with the town and a large river in the rear, it was dangerous to attempt a retreat, and to advance was out of the question, from the inferiority of his force. Benigsen now became anxious to resume his communication with Whelau, a town on the Pregel, which was his original point of retreat, and where he hoped to join the Prussians under General L'Estocq. To secure this object, he found himself obliged to diminish his forces still more by sending six thousand men to defend the bridge at Allerberg, some miles lower down the river ; and with what he had left, resolved as well as he could to maintain his position till night. The French advanced to the attack about ten in the forenoon. The broken and woody country which they occupied, enabled them to continue or renew their efforts at pleasure, while the Russians, in their confined situation, could not make the slightest movement without being observed. Yet they fought with the most determined bravery, insomuch that towards noon the French seemed sickening of the combat and about to retire. But this was only a

feint to repose such of their troops as had been most warmly engaged and to bring up fresh succours. The cannonade continued till about half-past four, when Buonaparte brought up his full force in person for the purpose of one of those desperate and overwhelming efforts to which he was wont to trust the decision of a doubtful day. Columns of enormous power and extensive depth appeared partly visible among the openings of the wooded country ; and seen from the town of Friedland, the hapless Russian army looked as if surrounded by a deep semicircle of glittering steel. The attack upon the whole line, with cavalry, infantry, and artillery, was general and simultaneous, the French moving on with shouts of assured victory ; while the Russians, weakened by the loss of not less than twelve thousand killed and wounded, were obliged to attempt that most dispiriting and hazardous of all movements—a retreat through encumbered defiles in front of a victorious army. The principal attack was directed on the left wing, where the Russian position was at length forced. The troops which composed it streamed into the town, and crowded the bridge and pontoons ; the enemy thundered on their rear ; and it was only the desperation with which the soldiers of the Russian imperial guard turned and charged at the point of the bayonet the corps of Ney, which led the French vanguard, that prevented the total destruction of the left wing.

At the same time the bridge and pontoons were set on fire to prevent the French, who had made their way into the town, from taking possession of them. The smoke rolling over the combatants increased the horror and confusion of the scene : yet a considerable part of the Russian infantry escaped by a ford close to the town, which was discovered at the moment of defeat. The Russian centre and right, which remained on the west bank of the Aller, effected a retreat by a circuitous route, leaving the town of

Friedland on their right, and passing the Aller by a ford a good way lower down the river. The two divisions of the Russian army which had been separated were thus enabled to unite once more on the right of the Aller, and pursue their disastrous flight towards Wehlau. Either the destruction of the bridge or perhaps motives of policy prevented Buonaparte from pursuing the remains of the Russian army.

The most important consequences resulted from this victory, not less decisive in the event than admirable in its conception. Königsberg was evacuated by the King of Prussia and his forces, as it was evidently no longer tenable. Benigsen retreated to Tilsit on the Russian frontier. But what was the object most desired by Napoleon, it had the effect of disposing the Emperor Alexander to peace. A door to reconciliation had been studiously kept open by Napoleon between the Czar and himself, towards whom he abstained from every kind of indiscreet personality, throwing out more than one hint that a peace which should divide the world between them, was at any time at Alexander's option. The time had at last arrived when the latter seemed inclined to listen to terms of accommodation with France. He had been previously dissatisfied with his allies, who were either feeble or unfortunate. Unlike most monarchs too, he was not without some compunction for the extreme sufferings of his subjects. His army had been a favourite object of his attention; and he was shocked to see his fine regiment of guards (proud as he had been of them) retain scarcely a vestige of their former numbers or appearance. The influence of Napoleon's name, coupled with corresponding deeds, might also have had its effect on the youthful imagination of the Russian Emperor, who was not himself without pretensions to the heroic character, and therefore might be supposed to esteem it in others; and who might

feel his pride soothed to find that the predestined victor who had subdued so many princes was willing to acknowledge an equality with him.

The Emperor of Russia's wish for an armistice was first hinted at by Benigsen on the 21st of June, was acceded to on the 23rd, and was soon after followed not only by peace with Russia and Prussia on a basis which bid fair to preclude the possibility of future misunderstanding, but by the formation of a personal intimacy and apparent friendship between Napoleon and the only sovereign in Europe who had the power necessary to treat with him upon a proper footing. The armistice was no sooner agreed upon than preparations were made for an interview between the two sovereigns. It took place upon a raft moored in the middle of the river Niemen, and on which was fixed a large tent or pavilion fitted up for the occasion. At half-past nine, 25th of June 1807, the two Emperors, in the midst of thousands of spectators, embarked at the same moment from the opposite banks of the river. Buonaparte was attended by Murat, Berthier, Bessieres, Duroc, and Caulaincourt; Alexander by his brother the Archduke Constantine, Generals Benigsen and Ouwarrow, with the Count de Lieven, one of his aides-de-camp. Arriving at the raft, they disembarked and embraced amidst the shouts and acclamations of both armies; and entering the pavilion which had been prepared, held a private conference of two hours. Their officers, who remained at some distance during the interview, were then reciprocally introduced; and the fullest good understanding seemed to be established between the sovereigns who had at their disposal so large a portion of the universe. It is not to be doubted that on this momentous occasion Napoleon exerted all those powers of personal attraction for which he was so remarkably distinguished, and which never failed to throw a spell (when he chose it) on all around him. If the courtly writers dwell with a certain complacency on this scene, caught

by the glare and parade of royalty, I cannot say that I (with feelings totally opposite) either shrink from or grudge it. If Buonaparte here rose to a height imperial, and thought it no robbery to be equal with kings and Cæsars, neither should he: he rose to that height from the level of the people, and thus proved that there was no natural inferiority in the one case, no natural superiority in the other. He confounded and annulled the distinction between the two classes of men, which one of them had wished to keep sacred, making unsparing war upon and arrogating to himself with a high hand their proudest claims and prerogatives. It was a satisfactory and noble demonstration that greatness was not the inheritance of a privileged few, and that kings and conquerors sprung from the earth, instead of being let down from Heaven to it. What showed Buonaparte in the most imposing light was the borrowed lustre that he reflected on Alexander, who merely served as a foil to him: he seemed to raise him up as an antagonist power necessary (in the absence of every other) to poise his own, and to impart vitality and interest to his remote and barren dominions. The frozen regions of the north might be said once more to stir and rouse themselves, "as life were in them." Russia hung suspended over and ready to fall upon the rest of Europe; and Buonaparte (looking at the map which they held trembling between them) might think it politic to add Spain to his end of the beam, to make the balance steady or even. The artificial mediums of knowledge which spread out the universe of things to our curiosity or cupidity, while they extend the limits, do not always give just proportions to our ideas: the human Brobdingnagian, standing over the mimic globe reduced to a nutshell, retains his own dimensions and importance, and thinks it easy to bestride the world like a Colossus. Ambition and self-interest ever draw rash and unwarrantable conclusions. In like manner, "*our king and country*" are two words that sound as well the

one as the other ; and hence are made use of to imply equal things. This is false arithmetic, politics, morality, though it is nearly inseparable from the nature and imperfection of language, which suits well enough with the purposes of sophists and declaimers, and falls in with the grossness of mankind, who seem incapable for the most part, and in what concerns them most, of counting beyond units.

The town of Tilsit was now declared neutral. Entertainments of every kind followed each other in close succession ; and the French and Russian, and even the Prussian officers, seemed so delighted with each other's society, that it was difficult to conceive that men so courteous and amiable had been for so many months drenching trampled snows or sandy wastes with their blood. The two emperors were constantly together in public and in private ; and their intimacy approached to that of two young men of rank, who are companions in frolic and in sport, as well as accustomed to be associates in affairs and upon occasions of graver import. On the more public occasions, there were guests at the imperial festivities, for whom they contained small mirth. On the 28th of June, the King of Prussia arrived at Tilsit, and was presented to his formidable rival. Buonaparte did not admit him to the same footing of familiarity with which he treated the Emperor Alexander ; and intimated that it would only be to oblige the latter, that he should consent to relax his grasp on the Prussian territories. Those in the king's own possession were reduced to the petty territory of Memel, with the fortresses of Colberg and Graudentz ; and it was soon plain that Prussia would obtain peace only by resigning nearly all the acquisitions she had made by fraud or violence since 1773. The queen, who had in a great measure provoked the war, was anxious to diminish the calamities of the peace. As the quarrel had been personal to herself, she felt the mortification of her present situation the more deeply, yet submitted

with the best grace she could to the ascendancy of the conqueror. "Forgive us," she said, "this fatal war—the memory of the Great Frederic deceived us—we thought ourselves his equals, because we are his descendants—alas! we have not proved such!" Desirous also to pay his court, Napoleon on one occasion offered her a rose of great beauty. The queen, who at first seemed to decline the courtesy, at length accepted it, adding—"At least with Magdeburg." Buonaparte answered, "Your Majesty will be pleased to recollect that it is I who offer, and that your Majesty has only the task of accepting." This reply, it must be confessed, was by no means well-turned. The disastrous consequences of the war with France, and the little influence she was able to exert in softening their severity, are said to have hastened her death.

The part of Poland acquired by Prussia in the partition of 1772 was disunited from that kingdom, and erected, as has been already stated, into a separate government or grand-duchy, with the King of Saxony at its head, and a military road across Silesia leading to it. By the new constitution of the grand-duchy, slavery was abolished, and the equality of rights established among all ranks of citizens. The grand-duke held the executive power; and a senate of eighteen members, with a lower house of deputies amounting to a hundred, passed into laws, or rejected at pleasure, such propositions as he laid before them. But the Poles were disappointed in the hopes either of the restoration of some of their ancient privileges, or of the establishment of their independence as a nation. Dantzic was recognised as a free city under the protection of Prussia and Saxony. The Emperor of Russia and the King of Prussia ratified as a matter of course the changes which Napoleon had wrought in Europe, and acknowledged the thrones he had set up, while out of deference to Alexander, he consented that the Dukes of Saxe Coburg, Oldenburgh, and

Mecklenburg-Schwerin, German princes allied to the Czar, should retain possession of their territories, France keeping the sea-ports till a peace with England. By the treaty of Tilsit, also, Russia offered her mediation between France and England, but it was understood that in case of a refusal by the latter, Russia would lend herself to enforce the continental system, and shut her ports against British commerce. It is also believed that Buonaparte was at this time apprised of the war shortly after waged against Sweden, by which Alexander deprived that kingdom of her frontier province of Finland, and thereby obtained a covering territory of the utmost importance to his own capital. This violent seizure never appears to have troubled the amicable relations, or to have caused the interchange of an angry word between the cabinets of St. James's and St. Petersburg. The boasted flame of justice and morality which rages with such vehemence in the breast of the English nation seems to light on wet or dry straw, as legitimacy or illegitimacy is concerned. The treaty of Tilsit ended all appearance of opposition to France upon the continent. The British armament, which had been sent to Pomerania too late in the campaign, was re-embarked; and the King of Sweden, evacuating Stralsund, retired to the dominions which he was not very long destined to call his own. After remaining together for a fortnight, during which they daily maintained the most friendly intercourse, and held long and secret conferences together, the two Emperors parted with demonstrations of the highest personal esteem, and each heaping on the other all the honours which it was in his power to bestow. The peace between France and Russia was signed on the 7th—that between France and Prussia on the 9th of July. The Congress broke up on the same day; and Napoleon, on his return to France passing through Saxony (where he received a visit from the king), arrived on the 29th of the same month at the palace of St. Cloud, where he was greeted

with the homage of the senate, and of the other official and constituted bodies, couched in language less proper to be addressed to a man than to a God.\*

\* It was during Buonaparte's absence in the campaign of Poland that the son of Hortense Queen of Holland died at the age of six or seven years. Buonaparte was thus disappointed of an heir in that quarter, (on whom he had fixed great hopes), and this is supposed to have first given rise to the settled idea of a divorce from Josephine, which took place two years after. It was whispered among the courtiers on their return to Fontainbleau in the summer of 1807; and it is imagined to have had its share in some of the compliances of Napoleon with Alexander's designs (particularly in regard to Turkey) in the hope of obtaining the hand of one of the Russian Archduchesses in marriage.

## CHAPTER XXXIX.

## AFFAIRS OF SPAIN.

Napoleon's conduct to Spain considered ; proclamation of the Prince of the Peace ; his circular to the clergy and authorities ; French and Spanish ambassadors quit Lisbon ; war declared against Portugal ; flight of the prince-regent to the Brazils ; partition of Portugal proposed ; Prince of the Asturias imprisoned by Charles IV. his father ; is liberated, and betrays his advisers ; Napoleon visits Venice ; declares Eugene Beauharnais his heir to the Italian crown ; the French troops enter Spain from Portugal ; they approach Madrid ; commotion in the capital ; Charles abdicates in favour of Ferdinand ; retracts his abdication as forced ; admirable letter of Buonaparte to Murat ; remarks ; arrival of Ferdinand at Bayonne ; letter from him intercepted ; the old king and queen arrive ; their reception ; mode of living ; tumults at Toledo and Burgos ; indiscreet conduct of Murat.

**BUONAPARTE** in his behaviour with regard to Spain, it must be confessed, " sounded the very bass-string" of a Machiavellian policy. I know of nothing that can be pleaded in his excuse, but the natural contempt that he must have felt for the reigning family who were ready to tear one another to pieces for the possession of the sovereign power, and were eager to resign it to him sooner than let one another have it, and a correspondent want of respect for a nation that seemed to be in love with its chains. From the exposure which the domestic quarrels between the father and son made of their imbecility and profligacy, he must have seen more clearly than ever what sort of stuff the old and legitimate monarchies of Europe were composed of, with some slight inclination to retort the feeling of cheapness and rancour with which they beheld him ; at the same time that viewing their subjects through the diminished perspective which a copartnery with thrones lent him, as they looked up to these poor creatures as the gods of their idolatry

and their only refuge, was not the way to increase his deference for or his sympathy with the people. He saw a crown torn from the brow of the wearer by the immediate heir to it ; and (imitating the treachery and usurpation) tried to seize and keep it in his own grasp with as little dignity as success ; he saw a people worn out and debased under a long course of absolute government, and wished to renovate their institutions by infusing into them some of the principles of modern legislation and improvement ; but they strove with the courage of heroes and the patience of martyrs for what was then called freedom and independence, but has since received an interpretation (written in the blood of its mistaken champions) into the more legitimate language of bigotry and despotism.

Farther, Buonaparte's attack upon Spain was not quite so gratuitous or unprovoked as it has been usually considered. She had given him cause to distrust the sincerity of her friendship (any farther than it was compulsory) and to guard against the ill effects of her half-smothered and ill-disguised enmity, by taking the reins of her government into his own hands when the temptation offered. The secret of her lurking ill-will transpired in a proclamation by the Prince of Peace at the time of the campaign of Jena. No notice was taken of it at the time, but it was doubtless remembered afterwards. This curious and enigmatical document was as follows :

*“Proclamation of the Prince of the Peace.*

“In circumstances less dangerous than those in which we are at present placed, good and loyal subjects have been forward to aid their sovereigns by voluntary contributions and succours proportioned to the wants of the state. It is then in the actual circumstances that it becomes necessary to show ourselves generous in behalf of our country. The kingdom of Andalusia, favoured by nature in the breeding of horses proper for light cavalry, the province of Estre-

madura which rendered in the same way services so important to King Philip the Fifth, can they with indifference behold the royal cavalry reduced and incomplete for want of horses? No! I do not believe it; I trust, on the contrary, that after the example of the illustrious progenitors of the present generation, who aided the predecessor of the reigning sovereign with levies of men and horses, the descendants of these brave patriots will also hasten to furnish regiments or companies of men dexterous in the management of the horse, to be employed in the service and defence of the country, as long as the impending danger shall last. This once over, they will return full of glory to the bosom of their families, each disputing with his neighbour the honour of the victory: one shall attribute to the valour of his arm the safety of a family, another that of his chief, his kinsman, or his friend; all, in fine, shall boast of the preservation of the state. Come, then, dear fellow-countrymen, come and range yourselves under the banners of the best of kings. Come; I offer you in advance the assurance of my gratitude and welcome, if it please God to grant us a fortunate and durable peace, the only object of our vows. Come; you will not yield to the suggestions either of fear or perfidy; your hearts will be closed against every species of foreign seduction; come, and if we are forced to cross our arms with those of our enemies, you will not at least incur the danger of being marked as suspected persons, nor will you strengthen a false imputation on your honour or loyalty by refusing to answer the appeal which I make to you.

“But if my voice is too feeble to awaken in you the sentiments of true glory, be your own prompters, become the fathers of the people, in whose name I address you: let what you owe to them make you remember what you owe to yourselves, to your honour, and to the religion which you profess.

(Signed) “THE PRINCE OF THE PEACE.

“The Royal Palace of St. Laurence, Oct. 5, 1806.”

This proclamation was followed up by a circular, addressed by the prince generalissimo to the governors of provinces and to the corregidores of all the cities in the kingdom. Its tenor ran thus :

“Sir,—The king commands me to say, that under the existing circumstances he expects of you an effort of zeal and activity in his service ; and I myself in his name recommend to you the greatest vigilance in the drawing of the lots which must soon take place, wishing you to observe that we shall not be satisfied, neither his Majesty nor myself, with those ephemeral exertions which it is customary to make in ordinary cases. You may notify to the curates, in the name of the king, that they will be seconded by the bishops in urging the people to enlist under our standards, and exhorting the rich to make the necessary sacrifices towards defraying the expenses of a war which we shall perhaps be compelled to support for the good of all ; and as it will exact great efforts, the magistrates ought to be sensible that it is more particularly their duty to employ all likely means to excite the national enthusiasm in order to enter the lists that are about to be opened. His Majesty feels confident that you will neglect none of those that may call forth the greatest number of soldiers in your province or excite the generous ardour of the nobility (for their privileges as well as those of the crown are at stake) and that you will do all that lies in your power to attain both these important ends.

(Signed) “THE PRINCE OF THE PEACE”

By a singular coincidence enough, this circular was dated from Madrid, the 14th of October, the same day as the battle of Jena. But for the turn which that battle took, and which put a sudden stop to all this raising of cavalry and marching of troops, we should have had Spain unsheathing the sword in the good old cause, England paying the price, and a world

of blood shed to attain a durable peace, long before Buonaparte's unprincipled and unprovoked aggression on Spain had roused the dormant loyalty and fiery patriotism of that old cradle of romance and chivalry. Europe reeled and heaved with war like an earthquake under Buonaparte's feet, and he was accused of not standing still: no state made peace with him as long as it could help it, and broke it as soon as it could; those that were sorely against their will at peace and disarmed time after time, kept up a secret understanding and yearning sympathy with those that were at open and irreconcileable war. Spain was one of those that had longest gnawed the bridle, and that if he had failed at Jena would have been at his heels to unfurl the banners and once more awaken the war-cry of religion and social order in the passes of the Pyrenees; and it was in part to preclude such contingencies and put an end to similar proclamations and circulars in future, that he stepped in between the scandalous dissensions of the father and son to take the power of peace and war in that country into his own hands—in an evil hour and with fatal results, it must be owned, but not without grounds (both in the letter and the spirit of her counsels) to qualify what there was of barefaced violence or meanness in the attempt.

Portugal, which kept up a close correspondence with the English government, refused to acquiesce in the continental blockade, which was thus defeated of its object. Angry discussions arose, and the French ambassador was ordered to quit Lisbon. The Spanish ambassador did so the same day; and the French and Spanish troops marched in concert against Portugal. War was formally declared: the Prince Regent did not wait to have his capital invaded; he embarked for the Brazils, and left his kingdom to General Junot, who commanded the French army, and who, without striking a blow in the quarrel, obtained for himself the dukedom of Abrantes. The intelligence of the flight of the royal family from Lisbon was hawked about the streets of London as "glorious news;" and

the disappointment of Buonaparte's design of getting them into his power was hailed as a master-stroke of state policy. So low were the hopes of the allies fallen (how changed since!) and so little did they look for any better result than the indulgence of their own rage and obstinacy, that it is not impossible if George III. had been compelled to take refuge in Canada in prosecution of the same just quarrel, it would have been trumpeted forth as "a glorious event," if the Courier-office had been left standing, and purchasers could have been found for a third edition of that loyal paper! *Chacun à son tour.* It was about this period that the same writers, despairing of seeing any good likely to come of the war, began to maintain boldly and lustily that it was a great good in itself; that war was the natural state of mankind, "lively, audible, and full of vent," while peace was altogether "flat, stale, and unprofitable;" that war was the sinews of commerce, the prop of the altar and the throne, that it filled the pockets of the rich and carried off the superfluous population from among the poor, that it was a wise and salutary dispensation of Providence, that the taxes were merely a circulating medium, that the debt served as ballast to the state; and that the war-system, bequeathed as a legacy to the country by the late "heaven-born" minister, was the only one under which it could maintain its existence, independence, or dignity. All this pompous and hollow declamation was to be understood, however, only *under the rose*, as applying to war when carried on by ourselves or our allies; but if it was made by Buonaparte upon us or others, then this gentle, harmless creature (the darling plaything of king, parliament, and people—so wanton, so dazzling, so beautiful with its crimson spots and warm glossy fur) was instantly transformed into a hideous, hateful monster, with all its old terrors restored and caricatured if possible, and we were called upon to make one more combined and arduous effort

in order (this was the usual but-end of a speech from the throne) to put an end to the calamities of war by securing the blessings of a solid and durable peace. Such was the state of fearful self-delusion and notable inconsistency to which the public mind was at one time reduced by insidious counsels and by venal pens. The tone was changed with circumstances soon after—the objects remained and remain the same, as every day makes more apparent.

Buonaparte was at Fontainebleau in October 1807, when a M. Izquierdo, counsellor to the King of Spain and a creature of Don Manuel Godoy, arrived there to conclude a treaty between the Emperor and his Catholic Majesty, relating to the partition of the kingdom of Portugal, which General Junot had just conquered. The first article gave to the King of Etruria in exchange for Tuscany (which Napoleon took to himself and added to the kingdom of Italy) the Portuguese territory lying between the Minho and the Douro; and the second article erected the kingdom of Algarves, including the province of the Alemtejo, into a principality in favour of Manuel Godoy, Prince of the Peace. This transferring of sovereignties implies the transferring of subjects; and surely either one or the other must be wrong, if it can possibly be avoided. Nearly at the same epoch and date as the treaty of Fontainebleau (October 27th) Charles IV. published a royal edict against the Prince of the Asturias (since Ferdinand VII.) and had him arrested and kept close prisoner in his apartments in the Escorial, as being at the head of a conspiracy to deprive his father of his throne and life. On his begging pardon, however, and disclaiming all intention of violence beyond that of removing the favourite Godoy, he was forgiven and restored to liberty. The first act of his inglorious career was to betray his late advisers and accomplices. Just before the discovery of the plot, and by way of insinuating himself into favour, he had written by stealth to Napoleon, to

request one of his nieces in marriage. There is no proof either for or against the ulterior designs of the conspiracy, farther than his own disclaimer, which is absolutely worthless ; but as he actually carried his usurpation into effect in the spring following, there can be little doubt that it was meditated in the first instance. Nor is there any difficulty in crediting both parts of his father's accusation against his rebellious son. Unnatural sentiments are the familiar growth of unnatural situations. His education had been neglected ; and he had had no adviser but the canon Excoiquitz, armed with fanatic fury and plenary indulgences. His understanding seems never to have reached beyond that low cunning, which answers to the instinct of self-preservation in animals. He was, besides, hated by both his parents, to please their mutual favourite Godoy ; for it is not the least striking part of this characteristic episode of royalty that both the king and queen appeared to have lavished all their tenderness and anxiety on a person who was neither entitled to admiration nor esteem, to the exclusion of every common obligation, and even the forgetfulness of themselves, thus showing that the mind in all cases requires an object to fix its entire affection upon, and that those who are raised to the most exalted situations, and whose pride and caprice are their ruling passion, naturally choose an object that owes all to themselves, and where, as the preference is without a motive, so it may know no bounds of reason, decency, or common sense. Feeling no extraordinary virtues or talents in themselves to excite the homage and obedience of their subjects, they bestow their goodwill equally at random, and think it hard if they cannot be as absurd as the rest of mankind, or even distinguish themselves in the unaccountableness of their attachments. Princes generally choose their favourites among the meanest or the most mischievous of the species—those who oppose the least resistance to their will, or who are the most

dangerous instruments in executing it. In the present instance, however, Godoy seems to have been the master rather than the obsequious tool, and to have taken the affairs of government completely off the indolent and incapable shoulders of Charles IV.

The Emperor did not send any answer to Ferdinand's letter respecting the marriage, but set off for Italy, where he visited Venice, of which he had become the sovereign by the treaty of Presburg; carried into effect the article in the treaty of Fontainebleau, which added Tuscany to his dominions; and in case of his death without issue, declared Eugene Beauharnais his heir and successor to the crown of Italy. In the meantime, the French troops on their march to Portugal occupied the fortresses of St. Sebastian, Pampeluna, Barcelona, and Figueres on the frontiers of Spain, and advanced as far as Vittoria. Godoy by his connivance opened all these places to them, regardless of the defenceless state of the country, and intent only on screening himself from the public hatred and on securing possession of his principality of Algarves. Murat approached Madrid by the route of Somma-Sierra, Buitrago, and St. Agostin: but he stopped at the latter place. The greatest alarm and agitation prevailed as to the result of all these measures, and the nation fixed its eyes with anxiety and expectation on the Prince of the Asturias. On the 18th of March, 1808, an order came from the Prince of Peace to the council of Castile to send the Walloon guards, the light regiments of carbineers, and the whole of the garrison of Madrid to the palace of Aranjuez, where the royal family then were. The pretext for this removal was to prevent any quarrels between the garrison and the French troops on their arrival; but its real object seemed to be to deliver the capital into the hands of the French. The council sent a remonstrance, and deliberated all day without coming to a conclusion. In the night, the troops were

marched off; while a large part of the population of Madrid accompanied them. On the way they made no secret of their intentions, vowing vengeance on the obnoxious favourite. Their approach to Aranjuez alarmed the poor old king, who agreed to dismiss Godoy from all his functions, but this concession was not sufficient. Ferdinand who had hitherto appeared to take no notice of what was passing, now came forward, put himself at the head of his party, and Charles was compelled to abdicate on the 19th in favour of his son, in the midst of bayonets and the threatening cries of the populace. The only condition that he demanded was the life of his minister. Godoy was discovered concealed in a hay-loft belonging to the palace of Villa-Viciosa, was snatched from the mob who were maltreating him by Ferdinand, and conveyed under an escort to prison, and the next day all his goods were declared to be confiscated, and an order issued for his trial. The prince then gave notice that he should proceed forthwith to Madrid to be proclaimed king. He arrived here on the 24th of March: the Grand-Duke of Berg had entered with his troops the preceding day; but this occasioned no disturbance for the present, the people being entirely taken up and intoxicated with their recent triumph. Ferdinand appointed the Duke l'Infantado colonel of the Guards, and recalled his former partisans who had been exiled; at the same time that the old king, being freed from immediate danger, retracted his abdication as forced from him, and applied to Napoleon for his interposition to dispose of his crown as he pleased, and to extend his protection to the Prince of Peace. The queen wrote to the Grand-Duke of Berg to the same effect, who promised his good offices, and who ordered detachments on Segovia and Toledo, thus drawing a circle of troops round the capital. Buonaparte, when he heard it, did not approve of this step. Murat had sent him word what he had done, with an account of the events of Aranjuez, and re-

ceived from him the following admirable letter in answer, which would almost show that he was precipitated into his subsequent measures by the strength of sudden temptation, or by the baseness and inefficiency of those he had to deal with.

“ March 28th, 1808.

“ MONSIEUR THE GRAND-DUKE OF BERG—I am afraid lest you should deceive me with respect to the situation of Spain, and lest you should also deceive yourself. Events have been singularly complicated by the transaction of the 20th of March. I find myself very much perplexed.

“ Do not believe that you are about to attack a disarmed people, or that you can by merely showing your troops subjugate Spain. The revolution of the 20th of March proves that the Spaniards still possess energy. You have to do with a new people. It has all the courage and will display all the enthusiasm shown by men, who are not worn out by political passions.

“ The aristocracy and the clergy are the masters of Spain. If they are alarmed for their privileges and existence, they will bring into the field against us levies in mass, which might eternise the war. I am not without partisans: if I present myself as a conqueror, I shall have them no longer.

“ The Prince of the Peace is detested, because he is accused of having betrayed Spain to France. This is the grievance which has assisted Ferdinand’s usurpation. The popular is the weakest party.

“ The Prince of the Asturias does not possess a single quality requisite for the head of a nation. That will not prevent his being ranked as a hero, in order that he may be opposed to us. I will have no violence employed against the personages of this family. It can never answer any purpose to make one’s-self odious and inflame animosity. Spain has a hundred thousand men under arms, more than are necessary to

carry on an internal war with advantage. Scattered over different parts of the country, they may serve as rallying points for a total insurrection of the monarchy.

"I lay before you all the obstacles which must inevitably arise. There are others of which you must be aware. England will not let the opportunity escape her of multiplying our embarrassments. She daily sends advices to the forces which she maintains on the coast of Portugal and in the Mediterranean; and enlists into her service numbers of Sicilians and Portuguese.

"The royal family not having left Spain to establish itself in the Indies, the state of the country can only be changed by a Revolution. It is perhaps, of all others in Europe, that which is the least prepared for one. Those who perceive the monstrous vices of the government and the anarchy which has taken place of the lawful authority, are the fewest in number. The greater number profit by those vices and that anarchy.

"I can, consistently with the interests of my Empire, do a great deal of good to Spain. What are the best means to be adopted?

"Shall I go to Madrid? Shall I take upon myself the office of Grand Protector in pronouncing between the father and the son? It seems to me a matter of difficulty to support Charles IV. on the throne. His government and his favourite are so very unpopular that they could not stand their ground for three months.

"Ferdinand is the enemy of France: it is for this he has been made king. To place him on the throne would be to serve the factions which for twenty years have longed for the destruction of France. A family-alliance would be but a feeble tie: the Queen Elizabeth and other French princesses have perished miserably, whenever they could be immolated with impunity to the atrocious spirit of vengeance. My opinion is that nothing should be hurried forward, and

that we should take counsel of events as they occur. It will be necessary to strengthen the bodies of troops which are to be stationed on the frontiers of Portugal, and wait.

"I do not approve of the step which your Imperial Highness has taken in so precipitately making yourself master of Madrid. The army ought to have been kept ten leagues from the capital. You had no assurance that the people and the magistracy were about to recognise Ferdinand without a struggle. The Prince of the Peace must of course have partisans among those employed in the public service: there is also an habitual attachment to the old king, which might lead to certain consequences. Your entrance into Madrid, by alarming the Spaniards, has powerfully assisted Ferdinand. I have ordered Savary to wait on the old king and see what passes. He will concert measures with your Imperial Highness. I shall hereafter decide on what is finally necessary to be done. In the meantime, the following is the line of conduct I judge fit to prescribe to you.

"You will not pledge me to an interview in Spain with Ferdinand, unless you consider the state of things to be such that I ought to acknowledge him as King of Spain. You will behave with attention and respect to the king, the queen, and Prince Godoy. You will exact for them and yourself pay them the same honours as formerly. You will manage so that the Spaniards shall have no suspicion whose part I mean to take: you will find the less difficulty in this, as I do not know myself.

"You will make the nobility and clergy understand that if the interference of France be requisite in the affairs of Spain, their privileges and immunities will be respected. You will assure them that the Emperor wishes for the improvement of the political institutions of Spain, in order to put her on a footing with the advanced state of civilization in Europe, and to free her from the yoke of favourites. You will tell the

magistrates and the inhabitants of towns and the well-informed classes, that Spain stands in need of having the machine of her government re-organised, and that she requires a system of laws to protect the people against the tyranny and encroachments of feudalism, with institutions that may revive industry, agriculture, and the arts. You will describe to them the state of tranquillity and plenty enjoyed by France, notwithstanding the wars in which she has been constantly engaged, and the splendour of religion, which owes its establishment to the Concordat which I have signed with the Pope. You will explain to them the advantages they may derive from political regeneration; order and peace at home, respect and influence abroad. Such should be the spirit of your conversation and your writings. Do not hazard anything hastily. I can wait at Bayonne; I can cross the Pyrenees, and strengthening myself towards Portugal, I can go and carry on the war in that quarter.

“I shall take care of your particular interests; do not think of them yourself. Portugal will be at my disposal. Let no personal object engage you or influence your conduct: that would be injurious to me and would be still more hurtful to yourself.

“You are too hasty in your instructions of the 14th; the movement you order General Dupont to make is too sudden, on account of the event of the 19th of March. They must be altered; you will make new arrangements: you will receive instructions from my minister for foreign affairs.

“I enjoin the strictest maintenance of discipline: the slightest faults must not go unpunished. The inhabitants must be treated with the greatest attention. Above all, the churches and convents must be respected.

“The army must avoid all misunderstanding with the bodies and detachments of the Spanish army; a single flash in the pan must not be permitted on either side.

"Let Solano march beyond Badajoz ; but watch his movements. Do you yourself trace out the routes of my army, that it may always be kept at a distance of several leagues from the Spanish corps. If war is once kindled, all would be lost.

"The fate of Spain can alone be decided by political views and by negotiation. I charge you to avoid all explanation with Solano, as well as with the other Spanish generals and governors. You will send me two expresses daily. In case of events of superior interest, you will dispatch officers of ordonnance. You will immediately send back the Chamberlain de Tournon, the bearer of this despatch, and give him a detailed report.

(Signed) "NAPOLEON."

In this letter (and it no doubt expressed his genuine and deliberate sentiments), Buonaparte seems feelingly alive to the difficulties of his situation, to the nature of the struggle in which he might be involved, and the dormant character of the people ; to be aware of the disadvantages under which Spain laboured, and the excessive caution and delicacy that must be employed in removing them. It would be too much to suppose that his views and purposes were changed by his nearer acquaintance with the Spanish princes, and that as he himself says, "when he found what poor creatures they were, he felt compassion for a great nation, over whom they were placed ;" for his joy at the approach of Ferdinand, and his astonishment at his trusting himself in his hands, show too clearly the use he intended, or thought it possible to make of the circumstance. But it is probable that the previous design he had formed was fixed and rendered palatable to himself by being let into the infirmities of this royal group, the besotted king, the changeling son, the mother proclaiming herself a strumpet to prove her son a bastard ;\* and that

\* This *trait* rests on the authority of Don Pedro Cevallos : Buonaparte denies it.

these repeated scenes of indecency and folly took away not only all compassion for the performers in them, but piqued the pride which he felt in his conscious superiority over these legitimate sovereigns to set aside their preposterous pretensions, and treat them as their inherent qualities deserved. He beheld an immense engine of power within his reach, and conceived a strong desire to snatch it from the baby-hands that knew not how to wield it. In this there was, it is true, a sort of natural justice, which gave an indirect warrant to the dictates of his ambition and self-will. Under his guidance he foresaw a brilliant prosperity and growing strength in reserve for Spain, and he did not think it right that a couple of royal marmozets should stand in the way of the prospect. He wanted to new-colour the map of Europe, and for this purpose the old boundaries must be effaced. He felt in himself the ability to infuse new life and vigour into "the vast dominions of Charles V. on which the sun never sets," and to raise up the Spanish monarchy from its tomb; and made light (to attain so important an object) of *kidnapping* its reigning princes, and leading a whole nation to its good, blindfolded, and against its will.

Two things suggest themselves here from Napoleon's failure on this occasion. The first is the necessity of justice on the liberal side of the question. Others may do, and have done, since the world began, very well without it, but *we* cannot. We have not custom, prejudice, fashion, and a thousand things to eke out our imperfections: we have nothing but our good cause and our good name to carry us through, and we cannot afford to have them fairly called in question. We appeal to justice; and by that we must abide. Our adversaries pay us the compliment to criticise us severely, and with reason, for we challenge the comparison. They who set up no other pretension than the right of the strongest or of prescription, can never be in the wrong while they are uppermost, or while the person, if not

the act, is legitimate. On the other hand, our smallest fault shows “ugly” by the side of the abstract standard of public good which we have fondly erected ; and our most casual departure from this shocks public opinion, and alienates numbers. This is seen remarkably in the present instance. Buonaparte, by seizing on a crown that did not belong to him, raised an universal hubbub of indignation against him from one end of Europe to the other, which has not subsided to this hour. The reason is, he had no traditional right or privilege to plead, and stood or fell by his own act or deed. That very crown that Buonaparte wrested from Ferdinand, the latter had torn with insolence and perfidy from his father’s brow, though no more notice was taken of this circumstance than if it had descended to him in the course of nature—he has since been the parricide of liberty and of his country—no one is surprised or shocked at it, it produces no effect, because he does not profess to be accountable to any law but his own will, and is absolved by his birth from every tie of humanity and justice. That which by a received *formula* sets itself above the law is also raised above opinion.

Again, if any one could pretend to govern by dint of mere ability and skill, it was Buonaparte : no one ever devised or carried into effect greater or more beneficial designs for his own or other countries : yet all his schemes at last recoiled upon himself, from his not allowing the popular voice and wish to act as an habitual counterpoise and corrective to the deductions of reason or the glosses of ambition. No one individual is as wise as the whole put together ; or if he were ten times wiser, his wisdom is not adapted to their ignorance. The more lofty and extensive his views, the less approbation and the more obstacles they will meet with ; and no man can stamp the seal of his understanding on the public weal, unless it is first melted by the warmth of attachment and sympathy. It is not enough that things are good in them-

selves : they require time and custom to make them desirable ; and these will make the worst endurable. If the people are enlightened and judges of the good intended for them, then they have a right to be consulted : if they are ignorant and incompetent, then they will spit our improvements back in our face. Truth indeed will prevail in the end with fair play, but not by a *fiat* of the will ; and all that force can do, is to neutralize the force opposed to its diffusion. Buonaparte viewed the matter in too literal and mechanical a light ; and thought that nations were to be drilled like armies. His system savoured too much of his school studies. Had he been a metaphysician instead of a mathematician, he would not have fallen into this error ; but then he would not have gained battles nor raised himself to the height he did. There is nothing that people resent more than having benefits thrust upon them : it is adding insult, as they think, to injury. Our attack on Copenhagen the year before was bad enough, and was loudly exclaimed against ; but it was nothing (in the vulgar estimation) to this affair of Spain. We went as open and declared enemies, determined to do the Danes all the mischief we could, for our own sakes. We took their ships from them ; we did not pretend to give them anything in exchange. This was honest and *above-board*. Mankind above all things hate to be made the dupes of doubtful professions of wisdom and benevolence.

There is another letter of Buonaparte's of nearly the same date with the one above quoted, addressed to Ferdinand, which, if meant to cajole the prince, is bad enough : if serious, is still worse. There are expressions in it about kings and the people, truly worthy of his correspondent ; and which could never be forgiven in him, but that he afterwards met with enough to cure him of this delusion, and that his attempts to pass beyond his proper sphere and character were as unavailing as those of the child to leap

over its own shadow. The factitious elevation from which he here pretends to look down upon the people will account for the little resistance he might be supposed to expect from them, and the thoughtless provocation he gave them much better than his grave and manly advice to Murat, so as to produce a direct contradiction in terms. His disposition to screen Godoy and to check every spontaneous impulse of popular feeling are also very bad symptoms. But if the intoxication of supreme power so soon turns the head of the individual (as it were in spite of himself) what must it do in the course of generations and when the poison is infused into the very blood? But to proceed. Ferdinand, uneasy at not being recognised as king by Murat, and anxious to pay his court to Buonaparte, set out for Bayonne, whither the latter had come on his way to Madrid.\* This resolution was taken without the advice of the council, and by no means pleased the people. He left the capital on the 10th of April, having appointed a regency with the Infant Don Antonio at its head, and reached Vittoria on the 16th. His progress was signalized the whole way with every demonstration of attachment and triumph. Some of the inhabitants in the excess of their zeal strewed their garments on the road where the wheels of the royal carriage were to pass, that they might preserve the marks of the joyful event ever after. Sovereigns so beloved can only improve on this homage and testimony of devotedness by riding over the necks of their subjects! On the day that Ferdinand arrived at Vittoria, the commission appointed to try Godoy received an order from the regency to stop proceedings against him; and he was soon afterwards released and conducted to the frontier by Buonaparte's desire—whether it was that the Emperor wished to oblige King Charles by saving

\* He was induced to proceed by an expression in Buonaparte's letter (which he received on the way) that "he felt a desire to converse with him on certain points."

the life of his favourite, or that he thought he might learn important state secrets from a man who had ruled Spain by a nod for twenty years ; or that he resolved to hold in his own hands all the twisted threads of policy ; or to check and mortify the impatience of the people for vengeance ; or finally, to show favour to an old *protégé* and tolerably faithful ally. Ferdinand had some difficulty to escape from the loyalty of the citizens of Vittoria, who were disposed to detain him by force among them, till he assured them of the perfect good understanding between himself and the French Emperor. On the 18th he received Napoleon's letter ; and still, in spite of the remonstrances of his most judicious friends, determined to proceed. He left Vittoria on the 19th, and from Irún sent forward an aide-de-camp of the Emperor's with a letter to say that he should be at Bayonne the next day, *if agreeable to his Majesty*. Buonaparte, when he received the news from his aide-de-camp, could hardly believe it. "How?" he exclaimed ; "is he coming? No! it is not possible!" These words have been quoted to show that Buonaparte had no malice prepense, no ill intentions in the business. They appear to me to show the contrary. What! was France become a robber's cave, that it was dangerous for a foreign prince to trust himself in it? Every man who comes into your house puts himself in your power ; but that alone does not give you the right to seize upon his purse or person. It is true, it does not appear that Buonaparte either decoyed or invited the Spanish princes into his territory : he merely *let them come* upon an understanding of good faith, and all that he had to do was to *let them go back again*. Would that he had! It would have had a much less injurious effect if he had gained possession of their persons by main force, than under a mask of hospitality and friendship.

The Prince of the Asturias arrived at Bayonne on the 20th. The Emperor had sent no one to the

frontiers to receive him ; but Berthier, Duroc, and the Count d'Angosse went to meet him a little way out of the town. An hour after, Napoleon went to pay him a visit, which lasted only a short time ; and the grand-marshall was then sent to invite the prince to dinner, together with Don Carlos, the Duke de l'Infantado, M. de Cevallos, the Abbé Excoiquitz, and others. Napoleon descended to the bottom of the steps, where the carriage of the prince drew up ; which was the only time he paid him any of the marks of attention usual towards crowned heads. At dinner he avoided with great care calling him either by the title of your majesty or your highness. He however made up for this omission by great courtesy to him and his suite ; all of whom went away apparently well pleased with their reception. An hour after Ferdinand had returned home, he is said to have received a message to announce that he would be treated only as prince of the Asturias, till the king should arrive at Bayonne, when the dispute might be cleared up between them.

The negotiations began the day after the arrival of Ferdinand, but made little progress. On the 27th, Josephine arrived at the Chateau de Marrac, and preparations were made for the reception of the old court of Spain. The Spanish princes were closely watched, and all their letters seized and opened at the frontier. Even the market-women were roughly handled by the custom-house officers, as they had often dispatches found on them for Spanish emissaries who were waiting on the other side of the Bidassoa. Early on the morning of the 29th, the Emperor had his prefect of the palace (who was acquainted with Spanish) called up, and made him translate the following letter word for word from the original.

*“To Don Antonio.*

“ Bayonne, April 28th, 1808.

“ DEAR FRIEND,—I have received thy letter of the

24th, and have read the copies of two others which it encloses, the one from Murat and thy answer: I am satisfied with it; I have never doubted thy discretion nor thy friendship for me. I know not how to thank you for it.

“The Empress arrived here yesterday in the evening at seven o’clock: there were only some little children who cried *Long live the Empress!* Besides, even these cries were very feeble; she passed without stopping, and went immediately to Marrac, where I shall go to visit her to-day.

“Cevallos yesterday had a warm dispute with the Emperor, who called him traitor, because having been minister under my father, he had attached himself to me, and that this was the cause of the contempt he had for him. I don’t know how Cevallos contained himself, for he is easily irritated, particularly in hearing such reproaches. I had not till to-day so well known Cevallos: I see that he is a man of probity, who regulates his sentiments according to the true interests of his country, and that he is of a firm and vigorous character; such as we need in circumstances like the present.

“I apprise thee that Marie Louise (Queen of Etruria) has written to the Emperor, that she was witness of the abdication of my father, and that she can state that it was far from voluntary.

“Govern well, and take care lest these cursed French should play thee false. Receive the assurances of my most tender attachment.

“FERNAND.”

The Emperor while reading this letter appeared hurt at what concerned the Empress, but still more indignant at the expression “*these cursed French.*” “Are you quite sure that that is the exact word?” he said to his interpreter; who showed him the word in Spanish—*Malditos.* “That is it, sure enough,”

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said Napoleon, "this word is almost Italian." This letter cost both parties dear ; and is an argument to point out the danger of such clandestine modes of getting at information : for, if we might else remain in the dark as to the real intentions of our adversaries, we are thus led to draw false and overstrained conclusions.\* The seeming duplicity provokes us, and does not leave us at leisure to make allowance for the difference between a casual expression of spleen or impatience, and a deliberate avowal that the parties would act upon. Ferdinand could hardly be expected to like the French as well as the Spaniards, or to forget that Josephine was not born a princess : yet it does not follow that he would have gone to war with the one or would not have been glad to marry a niece of the other. Napoleon, however, took him at his word, without his knowing it : the real sentiments and hatred of Ferdinand were, as he thought, thus revealed to him, and he proceeded to treat him accordingly. That same evening the official Gazette of Bayonne published the letter of Charles IV. to Napoleon with the protest against his abdication, which was a thunder-stroke to the prince and his party, and the next day the old king and queen of Spain reached Bayonne.

The Emperor had sent Duke Charles of Placentia and the Prince of Neufchâtel to Irun and the borders of the Bidassoa to compliment their Catholic Majesties, who on their entrance into France found a numerous detachment of troops ready to escort them. They were received at Bayonne with the greatest honours : the garrison was under arms, the vessels in the harbour had their colours flying, the cannon of the citadel and of the port were fired, and the

\* Buonaparte remarks that when the Count de Narbonne was sent to Vienna in 1813, by his superior sagacity in worming out the secrets of the Austrian cabinet, he compelled Austria prematurely to declare herself, which otherwise she might not have done at all. So doubtful are the advantages of superior *finesse* and *cunning* !

whole population poured out to welcome them with repeated acclamations as friendly and powerful sovereigns. The Grand Marshal Duroc received them at the government palace, and presented to them General Count Reilly, Count Du Manoir, and Count Audenarde, three of the most accomplished of Buonaparte's courtiers, who were appointed to attend them. The grandes of Spain who were at Bayonne followed the Prince of the Asturias, who went to meet his royal parents on the outside of the city. On their return, the ceremony of kissing hands took place, and the king then dismissed the assembly of nobles. Ferdinand, considerably at a loss, offered to follow the king, when the latter extended his arms to prevent him, asking in a tone of bitterness, "If he had not already sufficiently outraged his father's grey hairs?" and the prince, overwhelmed by the reproach, withdrew in the utmost confusion. Napoleon went to visit the old king and queen soon after, and stayed a long time with them; but did not invite them to dinner till the next day, leaving them the whole day to enjoy the satisfaction of being restored to their beloved Godoy.

The escort which accompanied their majesties was not numerous, but loaded with baggage and valuables. The carriages of the king, made after the model of those of the time of Louis XIV. which had conveyed Philip V. into Spain, presented a singular contrast to the elegance and lightness of the French equipages. It will scarcely be believed that the etiquette of the court condemned four huge lackeys in grand liveries to remain standing close together behind the king's carriage the whole way from Madrid to Bayonne, exposed to all weathers and to the clouds of dust on the high roads. These good folks took a journey just as if they were going to pay a visit in the neighbourhood. The next morning, when the Emperor's carriage came to fetch the king and queen, who had expressed a desire to pay the first

visit to the Empress Josephine, the king, who had a slight attack of the gout, and besides was encumbered with his sword, could hardly get into it, and was afraid of trusting his weight to the steps. He laughed at his own embarrassment. These high personages were received by Josephine with all the grace and courtesy which were inseparable from her. After the first compliments were over, something was said about the toilet, and the queen gladly accepted the offer of Josephine to send Duplan to give her women a lesson in the modern art of head-dressing. The queen looked altered indeed by submitting to the fashion, but not for the better. They brought the Prince of Peace with them to dinner, though he had not been invited. In going to the dining-room, Napoleon gave his hand to the queen; and walking faster than usual he perceived it, and checked himself, saying, "*Your Majesty perhaps finds that I proceed rather fast?*" "Sire," replied the queen, smiling, "it is your usual habit." Buonaparte answered awkwardly enough, as if he had stumbled over something, that "from his gallantry to the ladies he made it a point to conform in all things to their tastes." On sitting down to table, King Charles perceived that his favourite was not there: "But Manuel—but Godoy?" he said: and the Emperor smiling made a sign that he should be admitted. The conversation turned on the etiquette and customs of the two courts; and Charles IV. spoke of his passion for hunting, to which he attributed in a great measure his gout and rheumatisms. "Every day," said he, "whatever the weather might be, winter and summer, I set off after breakfast, and after having heard mass, I hunted till one o'clock, and returned to it again immediately after dinner till the close of day. In the evening Manuel took the pains to let me know if affairs went well or ill; and I retired to bed to begin the same round on the morrow, at least unless some important ceremony required me at home."

Ever since his accession to the crown, the king had led no other life.

In the midst of these proceedings, advices came from Murat and Don Antonio that troubles had broken out at Toledo and Burgos. Murat in a letter to the president of the council took upon himself (in direct opposition to Buonaparte's instructions) to quell these tumults, if the regent could not; and sent pressing and almost menacing applications to him to appoint an extraordinary junta of the principal nobles to repair to Bayonne to determine on the present state of Spanish affairs. In this as on so many other occasions, the zeal of the grand-duke outran his discretion. He was a mere swaggering upstart; and Napoleon ought never to have trusted him with the smallest responsibility beyond that of heading a charge of cavalry. But it was his foible to suppose that all those connected with him were capable of great things as well as himself, or that he could supply their deficiencies out of his own superabundance. In the night of the 29th of April, a secret council was held at Bayonne, in which the Duke de l'Infantado gave and signed his opinion that Ferdinand had not the right either for himself or his heirs to exchange the crown of Spain for that of Etruria, according to a proposition that had been made the preceding day. At Madrid the fermentation began to be extreme. The people, mad at seeing the prince whom they fondly idolised, and the favourite who had been given up to their vengeance snatched from them, grew impatient to know the fate of each; nothing transpired through the regular channels, as the couriers and dispatches were stopped at the frontier, so that the most exaggerated and absurd reports prevailed. In this state of irritation and painful suspense, a French soldier was killed by a Spanish peasant in the streets of Madrid on the 1st of May; preparations were making for the departure of the Queen of Etruria and of the Infant Don An-

tonio ; an aide-de-camp of the grand-duke narrowly escaped being assassinated ; another French officer was severely wounded in attempting to disperse a mob. Such was the prelude to an insurrection which had been so well foreseen, that the Spanish nobles at Bayonne wrote to their wives to quit Madrid before the approaching catastrophe. The French writers mention this to prove that they were not the assailants in this business, and so far they are right ; but it was the natural consequence of treating a whole nation as having no will of their own, because it was an absurd one, and of assuming the airs of a second Providence over them, without the privilege of invisibility.

## CHAPTER XL.

## THE SAME SUBJECT CONTINUED.

Insurrection at Madrid ; Ferdinand abdicates, and his father transfers the crown to Napoleon ; Ferdinand and his uncle escorted to Valençay ; Joseph Buonaparte made King of Spain ; meeting of the junta ; a ministry formed ; revolt in the provinces ; spirited reply of Palafox on being summoned to surrender Saragossa ; council of Spain annuls the abdication of Charles and Ferdinand ; defeat of the armies of Galicia and Castile ; Moncey repulsed in Valencia ; Cadiz declares against the French ; Junot driven back by Castanos ; surrender of Dupont's corps ; siege of Saragossa raised ; Buonaparte's progress to Madrid ; national animosity against the French ; Sir A. Wellesley lands in Portugal ; gains the battle of Vimiera ; progress of events in Germany ; conference of sovereigns at Weimar ; Napoleon returns to Paris ; interesting conversation with Wieland ; sets out for Spain ; Burgos taken by assault ; Victor defeats Blake ; deplorable state of the Spanish armies ; Madrid surrendered by the authorities, defended by the people ; Sir John Moore enters Salamanca ; joins Sir D. Baird at Mayorga ; commences a retreat ; battle of Corunna ; Sir John Moore killed ; the expedition disembarks.

ON the 2nd of May, early in the morning, the assemblages in the streets of Madrid became more numerous and threatening. A great number of peasants had been let into the city the day before. The grand-duke made the drums beat to arms, and stationed a strong detachment of the guard, with two pieces of artillery, in front of the palace. These preparations for defence did not intimidate the people, who continued to provoke and insult the French troops ; the outrages were carried to such a pitch, that orders were given to draw up the men in form of battle, and to reply by a fire from the two first ranks. The grape-shot had the effect of dispersing the mob. The same thing took place at the

several posts occupied by the French. The populace were obliged to take shelter in the houses, whence they contrived to fire from the windows and to kill a great number of the soldiery. The conflict in the streets and in the houses was thus kept up with sanguinary obstinacy the whole day. Towards evening, the government, protected by the French and Spanish troops (the latter of whom endeavoured to appease the tumult) published a proclamation which for some hours suspended hostilities. But the information which the rioters obtained of the approach of fresh troops, instead of quieting, only made them more furious than ever. The night was dreadful ; the French were obliged to force open the doors of houses, whence musket-shots were discharged at them : the rage was equal on either side. In the street of St. Victor, the mob\* got possession of a loaded cannon, pointed it against a column of French cavalry, and brought down a great number of them. The cannon was retaken, because the peasants who had seized upon it had no ammunition to charge it again. They were taken prisoners and slaughtered without mercy. The following day (the 3rd) was tranquil and silent as the tomb ; the fermentation had subsided ; the insurgents had used all their ammunition, had suffered great loss ; and it was by cart loads that the wounded were conveyed to the hospitals.

The Grand-Duke of Berg (who after the departure of Don Antonio was chosen president of the council) published a proclamation and a letter to General Dupont, in which he talked big of the *canaille* of Madrid, and distributed pardons with a munificent hand. Notwithstanding which, a military commission was appointed to try the insurgents, and some

\* Do not the *mob* always come into play whenever there is a general and thorough feeling of resistance excited in the community ? Their stirring is the last decisive indication, unless merely when they are set on by their superiors. Why then, when they appear on the popular side, should they cast a slur upon it ?

hundreds of peasants were shot. This piece of unnecessary barbarity, and the carrying off of Don Manuel Godoy were the two things which the Spaniards never forgave. The Emperor having read the dispatches which brought him an account of the events of the 2nd of May went in search of the king, and his countenance, over which he had ordinarily great command, betrayed the strongest emotion. Both the king and queen were in the room, and twice during the interview Charles left the apartment to go and give Godoy an account of what was passing. Such was the sort of infatuation from which all this train of calamity arose! It was agreed to send for the prince. It has been pretended that when Ferdinand entered the room, the three sovereigns remained seated; and that during the whole of this singular interview the prince was kept standing. If so, it must have been with the marked intention to humble and render him tractable to good advice, as it was contrary to Napoleon's habit to remain seated long together; and when anything interested him, he usually walked up and down the room, while venting his opinions or feelings. King Charles presenting the report to his son with a menacing air, said, "Read, read!" and when the prince had done so, "Behold," said the king, "the horrible result of the infamous counsels that have been given you by perfidious friends, and to which you have yielded with a culpable eagerness, thus forgetting the respect which was due to me, your father and your king: you have excited the revolt; but though it is easy to kindle a popular conflagration, it requires other hands than yours to extinguish it." The king added other opprobrious epithets to these reproaches, and declared that "if he did not instantly sign the abdication of the crown he had usurped, he and all his adherents should be seized as traitors, and punished as such." Ferdinand, without offering either expostulation or resistance, merely replied that "he had never offended

his father intentionally; and that if his happiness or that of the nation required it, he was ready to tender his resignation," showing the meekness of the lamb when he felt himself in the power of others, no less than the cruelty of the tiger when he had got them in his. "Go, and do so, then," said his father; and the next day (the 6th of May) after having consulted with his party, he signed his abdication of the crown. Charles IV. was no sooner in formal possession of this document than he hastened to avail himself of it by concluding a treaty with Napoleon, by which he transferred to him all his rights to the throne of Spain, stipulating only the independence and integrity of the kingdom and the maintenance of the Catholic religion, *not only as dominant, but as the only one tolerated.* He addressed a proclamation to the councils of Castile, and of the Inquisition, informing them of the circumstances, and hoping for their approbation; and Ferdinand himself, with the other princes of the blood, at the same time testified their acquiescence in the measure, which brought the affairs of Spain within a small compass. The King and Queen of Spain with Godoy set off a few days after for Fontainebleau, and Ferdinand, with Don Carlos and his uncle, was escorted without parade or seeming repugnance to Valençay, where he was received on his arrival by the Prince of Benevento, the proprietor of the mansion, and where he remained for some years, amusing himself with embroidering petticoats for the Virgin, and from time to time writing letters to Buonaparte, demanding one of his nieces in marriage. While Napoleon was making this extraordinary acquisition to his dominions, Alexander had robbed Sweden of Finland; but that country submitted with a good grace to the gentle violence of a legitimate monarch, making none of those outcries or convulsive struggles that Spain did, and soon after making common cause with the despoiler and ravisher, to put a stop to the encroachments and ambition of

France. The *hue-and-cry* of liberty is never raised under certain auspices, but to cover the designs of slavery.

It may seem strange that Charles IV. should be so easily prevailed upon to make over not only his own right and title to the throne, but those of his son and of his heirs and successors to all posterity. But there is a degree of incapacity so low that it even unfits men for being kings or aspiring to be so. It should be recollected that it is only a fine distinction that necessarily separates the tiara from the slabbering-bib; and that many of those who in modern times have sat upon thrones might but for this elevation have been doomed to wander as objects of pity and scorn about some village in their own dominions. This weakness of understanding when joined with good-nature has a tendency to make the possessors indifferent to power, which is only an incumbrance to them, as they see no use they can make of it; the same want of understanding combined with malice and pride makes them proportionably tenacious of authority, for mischief finds its objects better than good-nature; and the poorest creature (if trusted with power) can torment and worry a whole nation, which thenceforward becomes his delight and ruling passion. Such seems to have been the difference between the father and son in the present instance. Charles IV. could hardly be said himself to quit a throne which he had only nominally ascended: he had no farther satisfaction in a country from which Godoy had been banished, and could exercise his sovereign pleasure in playing duets on the fiddle without waiting for the person who was to accompany him. In a word, few kings have the sense to recollect that they are men: Charles had not enough to conceive how he could be any thing more than a private gentleman: and was contented with chasing the forest-deer, instead of hunting down his subjects to teach some future king of England how to rule over slaves and deal with traitors!

If Buonaparte had placed the crown of Spain on his own head and had seemed proud of it, "as he had title manifold" to power and sovereignty, there is no saying what might have happened: but as if it had not already been bandied about enough and trifled with, he chose to transfer it once more (to show how light and worthless it was) and placed it on his brother Joseph's head. This appears to have exhausted the patience of the Spaniards. Their disgust and hatred broke out in the most furious and unqualified terms of abuse; they called their new king "that barbarian, Joseph Buonaparte," "a monster;"\* and the juntas of the different towns had the "Constitutional Act" which was sent them, burnt by the common hangman. There was certainly nothing surprising in this. Custom is the god of ignorance: and there will always be the greatest horror of innovation in the most barbarous and uninformed minds, that is, where there is the greatest need of it. Those who read and reflect know what changes have taken place or may yet take place in the world: those who only know the object before them, what their senses or their blind guides teach them, have no conception of any thing else as possible or endurable; and look upon every change as a violence done to nature. The strongest antipathies often exist with the least reason for them; nor is this to be remedied, since the passions are the only safe-guard of those who have no means of guarding against injustice or imposture by knowledge and principle. Even the presence of Buonaparte and of the new king himself could not extort any cordial or unqualified expressions of allegiance from the nobles assembled at Bayonne (7th of June) to offer their congratulations. The Duke de l'Infantado in particular stopt short in the midst of a complimentary address by saying that

\* This "monster and barbarian" had done more while king of Naples for a short time before to civilize and reform that wretched country than would have been done by a *menagerie* of Bourbons in a million of years.—See *Memoirs of the Duke of Rovigo*.

he could promise no more till the nation had confirmed the choice, and drew upon himself on the spot one of Napoleon's most vehement and pointed rebukes. "You are a gentleman, sir; behave like one: and instead of disputing on the terms of an oath which you mean to break the first opportunity, go and put yourself at the head of your party in Spain, fight openly and loyally. I will have your passport delivered to you, and I give you my word of honour that the advanced posts of my army shall let you pass freely, without molesting you. This is the course becoming a man of honour." The duke stammered out a number of excuses and professions of fidelity: "You are wrong," said the Emperor; "this is more serious than you think for: you will forget your oath, and will render yourself liable to be shot—perhaps eight days hence."

Notwithstanding these heats and the coldness which manifested itself on this occasion, the Junta met, and after some discussion adopted unanimously the constitution proposed to them. It was much the same as that afterwards established by the Cortes, so cried up at one time by our patriots and so utterly forgotten since—it abolished the Inquisition, set aside feudal services, annulled many oppressive imposts, and provided a check on the arbitrary power of the crown, by restoring the Cortes or national representatives. Joseph formed an administration, among whom were the Duke de l'Infantado and Don Pedro Cevallos, and set out on the 10th of July for Madrid. The officers of state, the grandees of Spain, the entire Junta, formed his escort on the road. By the time that he had entered Spain, almost all the provinces were in open revolt; the harbours were covered with the English fleets; Biscay, Catalonia, Navarre, Valencia, Murcia, Andalusia, Estremadura, Galicia, the kingdom of Leon, the Asturias, with part of the two Castiles, fired with enthusiasm and revenge, were up in arms; and Saragossa, already besieged ever since

the beginning of June, and defended by the gallant-minded Palafox, was firmly resolved to bury itself under its ruins rather than open its gates to the besiegers. His answer to a summons from the French general to capitulate after a most sanguinary conflict will at once explain the tone and spirit that animated this new war.

“Sir,—If your master sends you to restore the tranquillity which this country has never lost, it is needless that he should take the trouble. If I am bound to repay the confidence which this valiant people have shown in drawing me from the retirement in which I lived, to place their interests and their glory in my hands, it is plain I should be wanting to my duty, were I to abandon them on the mere profession of a friendship in which I do not believe.

“My sword guards the gates of their capital, and my honour is pledged for its security. The troops must take some repose, because they are exhausted with the exertions of the 15th and 16th, though otherwise they are indefatigable, as I hope to be myself.

“So far is the flame caused by the indignation of Spaniards at the view of so many acts of injustice from being appeased, that it is thereby the more increased. It is easy to see that the spies whom you keep in pay send you false reports. A great part of Catalonia has acknowledged my command, as well as a considerable portion of Castile. The captains-general of Valencia and Murcia have joined me. Galicia, Estremadura, the Asturias, and the four kingdoms of Andalusia, are resolved to avenge our wrongs. The troops give themselves up to the most violent excesses: they plunder, insult, and massacre with impunity, the peaceable inhabitants, who have given them no sort of provocation.

“Neither that nor the tone which your excellency observes since the 15th and 16th are at all proper to satisfy a brave people.

"Let your excellency do what it pleases: I shall know my duty.

"The general of the troops of Arragon,  
"PALAFOX."

"In my head-quarters at Saragossa,  
the 18th of June, 1808."

Such were the lofty port and words which at this period accompanied the most daring feats of arms. These undaunted expressions did not, however, prevent the fall of Saragossa, though defended by women also with more than masculine courage and self-devotedness. It was twice taken and retaken with dreadful loss and carnage. Through such a formidable array of hostility did the new king reach Madrid on the 20th of July; and after remaining there eight days, was forced in consequence of the capitulation of Baylen to fly to Vittoria, to which a timely passage was opened to him by the success of Marshal Bessieres at Medina del Rio Seco.\* The Emperor heard the news of this event and of the disastrous affair of Andujar at Bordeaux on his way back to Paris. On the 12th of August, the council of Spain published a decree rejecting and declaring null and void the abdication of Charles IV. and Ferdinand, and the treaties concluded in consequence between France and Spain.

This may be considered as the conclusion of the first act of the drama of the Spanish Revolution. But in order to explain this result, it will be necessary to go somewhat more into detail. The Spanish juntas, which were established in every province, recommended it to the troops to avoid general actions as much as possible, to make the contest one of partisan-warfare, and to avail themselves of the advantages which the nature of the country and habits of the people held out in a protracted and desultory conflict,

\* Joseph in the hurry of his flight left behind him, among other things, David's picture of Napoleon crossing the Alps.

instead of coming in contact in large masses and regular combat with disciplined and veteran troops. But it was easier to give this advice than to follow it. The contest was one of passion and vengeance ; and the impatience of the armed peasantry, with their confidence in their own numbers and courage, induced them to suspect treachery, and even to put to death those generals who would not lead them on to give immediate battle to the French. Solano and Filangieri had both been sacrificed in this manner. Blake succeeded the latter in the command of the Galician army, which was in this state of insubordination. Having managed to form a junction with the levies of Castile and Leon under Cuesta, they proceeded together towards Burgos ; Cuesta, though he had already been beaten by the French near Caberon (with the obstinacy and touchiness of an old soldier) wishing to hazard the event of a battle, while Blake, dreading the superiority of the French discipline, deprecated the risk of a general action. Bessieres, who had lately defeated the insurgents in Biscay and Navarre in several partial actions, left them, however, no choice on the subject. He came upon them suddenly near Medina del Rio Seco, where, on the 14th of July, the combined armies of Galicia and Castile suffered the most calamitous defeat which the Spaniards had yet sustained. The insurgents fought with extreme bravery —more than twenty thousand slain were said to have been buried on the field of battle. The news of this victory at so critical a point of time was a great relief to Buonaparte. "It is," he said, "the battle of Villa-Viciosa. Bessieres has put the crown on Joseph's head. The Spaniards have now perhaps fifteen thousand men left, with some old blockhead at their head : the resistance of the Peninsula is ended." The victory of Medina del Rio Seco did in fact enable the new king to advance from Vittoria to Madrid, as well as to retire from it eight days after without molestation. He had been received formally,

but without any of the usual demonstrations of joy on such occasions; nor did the inhabitants even repair to the theatres, though they were thrown open at the public expense.

Hard upon the heels of this victory, however, followed intelligence of a different stamp and of a more serious import. Duhesme (with the troops that had taken possession of Barcelona and Figueras) was in hopes not only of maintaining himself in Catalonia, but of advancing to assist in the subjugation of Valencia and Arragon. He was notwithstanding repulsed by the natives, who made good the mountain-pass of Bruck against him, and compelled him to return to Barcelona. Marshal Moncey met with no better fortune in an expedition undertaken against Valencia. He was opposed by all the frenzy of popular feeling: the inhabitants rushed to man the walls—monks, women mingled in the fray—and unable to penetrate into the city, and disappointed of the reinforcement which he expected from Duhesme, he was glad to retreat towards the main French army, which occupied Old and New Castile. A worse fate attended the division of Dupont, which, after the entrance of Murat into Madrid, had been sent on towards Cadiz; but this attempt to secure that commercial city, and to protect its harbour, seems to have been judged premature by Napoleon, who might perhaps wish to leave the passage open for Charles IV. to have made his escape to South America, in case he had been so minded. Dupont's march was therefore countermanded; and he proceeded no farther than Toledo, till the disposition of the Andalusians and of the inhabitants of Cadiz showing itself more and more hostile, he was ordered forward to preserve that important seaport and the French fleet which was lying there. He accordingly advanced southward, traversed the Sierra Morena (where Don Quixote performed such wonders), forced the passage of the Guadalquivir, and gained possession of the ancient

town of Cordova. But Cadiz had already embraced the national cause; the French squadron was in the hands of the Spaniards; and Seville and its Junta were organising large levies to be added to a regular body of ten thousand men under Castanos at the camp of St. Roque near Gibraltar. Dupont in this situation could neither advance nor retreat. The passes of the Sierra Morena were by this time occupied with the insurgent mountaineers. He solicited reinforcements from Portugal and Madrid; but Junot had at present too much on his hands with the insurrection of the natives and the threatened descent of the English to afford him assistance, and he was only joined by two brigades under General Vedel and Gobert, detached from the army in Castile. With this addition, which made his force amount to twenty thousand men, he thought himself strong enough to attack; and accordingly proceeded to occupy Baylen, and took the old Moorish town of Jaen by storm. Here they were presently encountered by Castanos who had watched their movements; and after a severe contest, were compelled to fall back upon Baylen. Having learnt by an intercepted dispatch to Savary (who had succeeded Murat in the command of the army of Madrid) the straits to which the enemy was reduced, the Spanish general followed up his advantage, and on the 16th of July by an attack on various points drove the French back on Andujar. General Gobert was killed in the action. On the night of the 18th and through the greater part of the following day, the French made a desperate attempt to recover the village of Baylen, which was stoutly defended against them; and after a last effort to redeem the victory by a daring charge at the head of his troops, General Dupont found himself enclosed on all sides by a superior force, and obliged to surrender with the troops under his immediate command, amounting to fourteen or fifteen thousand men. The division of Vedel, which had not been engaged, was excepted from this stipulation, but was afterwards

included in it by a breach of faith on the part of the Spaniards.

The event of this battle freed the south of Spain, with the rich cities of Seville and Cadiz, from the dread of the invading armies; and the news of it shortly after reaching Madrid hastened Joseph's departure from that city. Saragossa still held out with the courage of a martyr behind her old Moorish battlements, till the convent of Santa Engracia falling into the hands of the besiegers enabled them to push their posts into the town. The French general (Lefebvre Deanouettes) announced his success in a triumphant summons:—"Santa Engracia—Capitulation." "Saragossa—War to the knife's blade," was the equally determined answer. The threat was made good; the citizens fought from street to street, from house to house, from chamber to chamber; the combatants often occupied different apartments of the same house; and the passages which connected them were choked up with the dead. After this dreadful struggle had continued for several weeks, the gallant defence of Saragossa excited at once the courage and sympathy of those who had at first looked on only with fear and distrust; and a considerable reinforcement was thrown into the place in the beginning of August. The news of Dupont's surrender became known soon after; and on the 13th of August, Lefebvre Deanouettes evacuated the quarter of the city in his possession. He blew up the church of Santa Engracia and other buildings, and finally retreated from a city which had so valiantly resisted his arms.

Buonaparte was at Bordeaux (as we have seen) when the account of the defeats of Andujar and Baylen reached him. He bit his lips; but it does not follow that he saw in it the overthrow of all his fortunes, and Europe crumbling beneath his feet, as some prophesiers after the event are fain to imagine. It did not cloud the *éclat* of the rest of his progress to the capital: he was welcomed all the way by triumphal

arches and the most unbounded expressions of adulation as having revived the miracle of the age of Louis XIV., by uniting the dynasties of France and Spain once more in his own person. The splendour of the achievement was too dazzling and too flattering to the national vanity to suffer the French to look narrowly into the means. It was not till a reverse of fortune that their eyes were opened to detect some flaws in the title-deed to so much glory, and to see the measure (stripped of success and without any of the beneficial consequences that were intended to flow from it) in all its abstract deformity. This would have been the time (if at all) for them to have shown themselves men, and to have remonstrated against an act of injustice and meanness ; and not when their manhood was put on only to escape a castigation. As for Great Britain, that noted bully and scold, aided by that hardened prostitute, the hireling press, and that more hardened prostitute, a ministerial majority—hawking about her contraband wares and spurious oales of iniquity, scouring the seas, and infesting the land with her officious alliance and shabby diplomacy, wheedling, bribing, raving, vomiting out defiance and death on all who would not come into her nefarious projects, winking at the seizure of Finland (in hopes the Russian autocrat might in time fall into her views, seeing his father's end before his eyes), standing and dancing with her arms a-kimbo on the smoking ruins of Copenhagen, and snapping her fingers with bare-faced contempt at the distinctions of right and wrong, like the Dutchman in Candide, "*car enfin je suis matelot*"—passing up and down the Dardanelles in her frantic importunity to make the Grand Turk embrace the cause of that old hag Legitimacy (whom hardly the houris of Paradise could rouse from his apathy), making common cause with Calabrian banditti and hunting down the Guavas of Buenos Ayres on the plea of driving a thriving trade in philanthropy—I would not believe a word that she said, though she

had blown a blast as loud as Orlando's horn at the pass of Roncesvalles, calling on Europe to rise in behalf of Spanish patriotism, liberty, and independence; or that the popular cause was any thing more than a stalking-horse made use of to destroy the popular cause, either then when men could only judge from the past, or now that it is proved by the sequel.

The Spanish insurgents were at first treated as rebels, which very properly gave rise to reprisals; and this sore cured itself. The troops also enforced military law against the peasants who took up arms, a practice for which a precedent is said to have been found in Buonaparte's suppression of the revolt of Pavia, as if that precedent was itself quite new to the principles and usages of regular warfare. The peasants in their turn retaliated, and fell upon the wounded, the sick, and the stragglers of the French army, without mercy. In the temper and circumstances of the time, it is quite as likely that they did not wait for any such provocation to fall upon their enemies when they had them in their power. In this manifestation of the national spirit, the lowest classes took the lead, as in other great public commotions. Women, priests, all classes joined in the quarrel, for it touched all classes. The excesses to which it led, the grotesqueness of appearance it assumed are not here ascribed (nor ought they to be so) to the madness or folly of the people, but to natural feeling and strong aggravation. Blood was also shed. At Valencia, a priest named Calvo, incited the rabble to massacre upwards of two hundred French residing in that city, on no other ground than their being French. The governor of Cadiz, Solano, falling under popular suspicion, was immediately put to death, and many such instances occurred. The Juntas called on the rich for patriotic contributions; on the priests to send the church-plate to the mint; on the poor to serve in the ranks or work on the fortifications. Mr. Southey's pen in tracing these events, with the spirit

and fidelity peculiar to him, may be said to run on in a well-known track, and almost to parody an exploded original. The subject seems to inspire him with a sparkling felicity, and “redolent of joy and youth, to breathe a second spring.” There is in the style a freshness and a fervour of feeling, as in his earlier productions, which he never fails to temper with an admirable decorum and even sanctity of sentiment. There are only two striking features of distinction in the pictures of the two revolutions—the want of a monk urging it on with a crucifix in the first, and of a king to be cashiered in the last ! No doubt the difference is a very material one. While these events were passing in Spain, Sir Arthur Wellesley, who had done much to extend the British empire in India, and had recently distinguished himself by his active share in violating the neutrality of Denmark, landed with an army at Lisbon to assert the independence of Portugal. He gained the battle of Vimiera over Junot on the 21st of August 1808, which however was rendered in a great measure abortive by the indecision and changes among the British commanders, three of them actually succeeding each other in one day ; and the affair ended in what at the time was considered as the disgraceful convention of Cintra. Probably the actual advantages we had gained might be overrated in the uneasy enthusiasm of the moment, as they were the first we had gained ; and for anything we knew at the time, might be the last. So near the brink of the precipice had we come in the desperate attempt to push others over !

It was in the interval between his return to Paris and his march into Spain at the end of the year 1808, that Napoleon proceeded to Erfurt to renew his intimacy and strengthen the connexion he had formed with the Emperor Alexander in the preceding autumn. It is needless to speak of the long acclamations and festive rejoicings which attended Buonaparte the whole way from St. Cloud to Erfurt, where he arrived

the 27th of September early in the morning. The Emperor Alexander left Petersburg on the 14th, and on the 18th had an interview with the King and Queen of Prussia, who came to Königsberg to meet him. He was received at Bromberg by the Duke of Montebello, who had been sent forward for that purpose ; and where the division of Nansonty paid him military honours. Alexander said, "he was pleased to find himself among so many brave men and such fine soldiers." He arrived at Weimar on the 26th, accompanied by Marshal Lannes and escorted by the troops of Marshal Soult, having passed through Leipsic and Frankfort-on-the-Oder. Napoleon on his arrival at Erfurt was welcomed with the most lively congratulations of the people. The King of Saxony was already there to meet him. After giving an audience to the Regency and the municipality of Erfurt, the Emperor mounted on horseback ; and having returned the visit of the King of Saxony, rode out of the city by the gate of Weimar. At a short distance he found the grenadiers of the guard, the seventeenth regiment of infantry, the first of the hussars, and the sixth of the cuirassiers drawn up in order of battle : after passing along the ranks, he ordered the cavalry forward on the road to Weimar, where presently after (about a league and a half from the city) he met the Emperor Alexander. As soon as this prince saw Napoleon, he got out of his carriage, and the Emperor alighted from his horse. The two sovereigns then embraced with the greatest cordiality. They then got on horseback, as well as the Archduke Constantine, and galloped along in front of the troops, who presented arms. The drums beat the charge. Numerous salvos of artillery mingled with the sound of bells and with the shouts of a vast concourse of spectators whom so extraordinary an event had drawn together from all quarters. During the whole of the time that the interview at Erfurt lasted, Alexander wore the Grand Cross of the Legion of Honour, and Napoleon that of

St. Andrew of Russia. The latter being *at home*, constantly gave the right hand to the Emperor Alexander. On the first day the two Emperors proceeded to the Russian palace and remained together an hour. At half after three the Emperor Alexander went to return Napoleon's visit, who descended to the bottom of the staircase to receive him; and when Alexander withdrew, he accompanied him to the entrance-door of the hall of the guards. The sentinels who lined the way, presented arms, and the drums beat the charge. At six o'clock, the Emperor of Russia came to dine with Napoleon. He did so on all the following days. The precedence among the other sovereigns was determined by the order of their adhesion to the Confederation of the Rhine. The King of Saxony and the Archduke Constantine were present the first day. At nine o'clock the Emperor conducted his guest back to his palace, where they remained together *tête-à-tête* for an hour and a half. The Emperor Alexander attended the Emperor Napoleon to the top of the staircase. The city was illuminated. The Prince of Weimar, and of Reuss, and the Princess of Tour and Taxis arrived in the evening.

The same routine was repeated almost every day, with little variation. The two Emperors breakfasted alone, called on each other in the course of the morning, and were together all the rest of the day, either in public or by themselves. Napoleon had been desirous to give the Emperor of Russia an opportunity of enjoying the representation of the well-known *chef-d'œuvre* of the French stage, and for this purpose had brought with him the principal performers of the *Théâtre Français*—Talma, St. Prix, Damas, Lafond, Després, Lacave, Varennes, with Madame Raucourt, Duchesnois, Bourgoing, Rose Dupuis, Gros, and Patrat. The first representation given was that of *Cinna*: the second was the tragedy of *Andromache*. The Emperor of Russia and the other illustrious strangers who were present seemed

to relish more and more the masterpieces of the French drama, and to be particularly delighted with the admirable acting of Talma. At the representation of *Cinna*, the box of the two Emperors was in the centre of the first tier facing the stage. Napoleon thought he perceived that at this distance the Emperor Alexander did not hear sufficiently well, on account of a defect in that organ. He in consequence gave orders to Count Remusat, his chamberlain, to have a platform raised on the site of the orchestra, with two elbow-chairs for the two Emperors and seats to the right and left for the King of Saxony and the other sovereigns. They were thus placed in view of the whole theatre. On the evening of the performance of *Edipus* the two courts were assembled as usual. In the first scene of the play, Philoctetes addresses Dimas, his friend and counsellor :—

“L'amitié d'un grand homme est un bienfait des Dieux.”\*

At this line, the Emperor Alexander turning towards Napoleon gave him his hand in a very graceful manner, as much as to say, that he considered his friendship in that light. This was the application made by all those present. Napoleon bowed, but with the air of one who declined so embarrassing a compliment. M. de Talleyrand did not fail to be at the Emperor's levee that evening to know precisely what had passed. On another occasion, as he was about to enter the dining-room, the Emperor of Russia, who was going to lay aside his sword, found he had forgotten it. Napoleon approached, and begged him to accept of his. Alexander took it eagerly, saying, “I accept it as a mark of your friendship. Your Majesty is well assured that I shall never draw it against you”—a protestation which would admit of an opposite construction.

On the 6th of October, the visitors at Erfurt accepted an invitation from the reigning Duke of Weimar

\* “The friendship of a great man is a benefit from the Gods.”

to pass a day or two with him. On the way a hunting pavilion had been erected in the forest of Ettersburg, where the Emperor Alexander, who was not fond of the pleasures of the chase from the shortness of his sight, brought down (as his *coup d'essai*) a fine stag that passed within eight paces of him. At night, the *Death of Caesar* was performed by the French actors at the theatre of Weimar; and after the play there was a ball, in which Alexander danced or rather walked a minuet with the Queen of Westphalia, the orchestra playing a Polish march. During the ball, Buonaparte had a long conversation with two celebrated Germans, Wieland and Goëthe. While here, the Emperor showed the most marked attention to the Duchess of Weimar, who after the battle of Jena had saved Weimar from being given up to the pillage of the French soldiers, who had entered it at the point of the bayonet, by the noble appeal she made to the generosity of the victor. The next day, the Emperors went over the field of the battle of Jena. In a tent erected on the spot where he had bivouacked on the night before that celebrated battle, Napoleon received a deputation of the city and university of Jena; and after numberless inquiries and details on the subject, distributed 300,000 francs to repair the damages done by fire and other consequences of the long abode of his military hospitals in that city.

The party returned to Erfurt to dinner about five o'clock. This evening there was no play, as the actors had not had time to get back; for which reason the company sat longer than usual at dinner. A question was started respecting the *Golden Bull* which, before the establishment of the Confederation of the Rhine, had served as a basis to regulate the election of the Emperors of Germany, the number and quality of the Electors, &c. The Prince Primate went into some particulars concerning this *Golden Bull*, which he said had been promulgated in 1409. The Emperor observed

that the date which he assigned to the Bull was not exact, and that it was proclaimed in 1336, under the reign of the Emperor Charles IV. "That is true, sire," replied the Prince Primate, "I was mistaken; but how does it happen that your Majesty is so well acquainted with these things?" "When I was a simple lieutenant in the second artillery," said Napoleon—at this introduction there was on the part of the august guests a marked expression of surprise. He resumed with a smile—"When I had the honour to be a simple lieutenant in the second company of artillery, I remained three years in garrison at Valence. I was not fond of society and lived very retired. By a lucky chance I happened to lodge at a bookseller's, a well-informed man and very obliging—I read through his library over and over during the three years I was kept in garrison there, and have forgot nothing, even of matters which had nothing to do with my profession. Besides, nature has given me a particular recollection of figures. I am often able, in discussions with my ministers, to quote to them the details and numerical amount of their accounts of the longest standing." There was a just and well-placed pride in thus speaking of himself in the presence of all Europe as it were assembled at a banquet of kings! After a number of magnificent presents and honours lavished on all sides, the two Emperors took leave of each other on the 14th of October, Alexander proceeding to St. Petersburg, and Napoleon returning to Paris, where he arrived on the 18th of the month. An account of Buonaparte's conversation with Wieland is extant, given by Wieland himself; and is in every respect too interesting and characteristic not to be inserted here.

"I had been hardly a few minutes in the room," says Wieland, "when Napoleon crossed it to come to us. I was presented by the Duchess of Weimar with the usual ceremonies: he then paid me some compliments in an affable tone, and looking steadfastly at me.

Few men have appeared to me to possess in the same degree the art of reading, at a first glance, the thoughts of other men. He saw in an instant that notwithstanding my celebrity I was simple in my manners and void of pretension : and as he seemed desirous of making a favourable impression on me, he assumed the tone most likely to attain his end. I have never beheld any one more calm, more simple, more mild, or less ostentatious in appearance : nothing about him indicated the feeling of power in a great monarch : he spoke to me as an old acquaintance would speak to an equal ; and what was more extraordinary on his part, he conversed with me exclusively for an hour and a half, to the great surprise of the whole assembly. At length, towards midnight, I began to feel that it was improper to detain him so long, and I took the liberty to demand permission to retire. ‘Go, then,’ said he, in a friendly tone ; ‘good night.’

“The following are the most remarkable features in our conversation. The tragedy which had just been represented\* having led us to speak of Julius Cæsar, Napoleon said that he was one of the greatest men in history ; and that he would have been the greatest of all but for the folly which he committed. I was going to ask him to what fault he meant to allude, when, seeming to read my question in my eyes, he continued : ‘Cæsar knew the men that wanted to get rid of him ; he ought to have got rid of them first.’ If Napoleon could have seen what was then passing through my mind, he would have read the conviction that no one would ever accuse him of the like folly.†

“The Emperor paused an instant, pronounced a few words indistinctly, and went on. From Cæsar the conversation naturally turned to the Romans : he

\* *La Mort de Cæsar.*

† This prediction on the part of Wieland was, however, premature. He was afterwards in a similar situation where others wanted to get rid of him, and he neglected to strike the first blow as he ought.

warmly eulogised their military and political system. The Greeks, on the contrary, did not seem to share his esteem. 'The eternal squabbles of their petty republics,' he said, 'were not calculated to give birth to anything grand: whereas the Romans were always occupied with great things, and it was owing to this they raised up the Colossus which bestrode the world.' I pleaded in favour of the arts and literature of the Greeks; he treated them with disdain, and said that they only made use of them to foment their dissensions. He preferred Ossian to Homer. He was fond only of serious poetry, the pathetic and vigorous writers, and above all, the tragic poets. He spoke of Ariosto in the same terms as the Cardinal Hippolito of Este; ignorant, no doubt, that it was giving me a box on the ear. He appeared to have no relish for anything gay; and in spite of the prepossessing amenity of his manners, an observation struck me often, he seemed to be of bronze. Nevertheless, the Emperor had put me so much at my ease, that I ventured to ask him how it was that the public worship which he had restored in France was not more philosophical, and in harmony with the spirit of the times? 'My dear Wieland,' he replied, 'religion is not meant for philosophers; they have no faith either in me or my priests: as to those who do believe, it would be difficult to give them, or to leave them, too much of the marvellous. If I had to frame a religion for philosophers, it would be just the reverse of that of the credulous part of mankind.''\*

\* Müller, the celebrated Swiss historian, has left a still more ample testimony to Buonaparte's character. The following is taken from Müller's posthumous works:

"On the 19th May, 1807, I was informed by the minister secretary of state, Maret, that at seven o'clock in the evening of the following day I must wait on the Emperor Napoleon. I waited accordingly on this minister at the appointed hour, and was presented. The Emperor sat on a sofa: a few persons whom I did not know stood at some distance in the apartment. The Emperor began to speak of the history of Switzerland; told me that I ought to com-

Scarcely had Buonaparte returned to Paris before he had to set out again for Spain. The campaign this time was little more than a military promenade ; there was

plete it ; that even the more recent times had their interest. He came to the work of mediation, discovered a very good will, if we do not meddle with any thing foreign, and remain quietly in the interior. He proceeded from the Swiss to the old Greek constitutions and history, to the theory of constitutions, to the complete diversity of those of Asia (and the causes of this diversity in the climate, polygamy, &c.), the opposite characters of the Arabian (which the Emperor highly extolled) and the Tartar races, (which led to the irruptions that all civilization had always to dread from that quarter, and the necessity of a bulwark,) the peculiar value of European culture (never greater freedom, security of property, humanity, and better laws in general, than since the 15th century); then how everything was linked together, and in the inscrutable guidance of an invisible hand ; and how he himself had become great through his enemies : the great confederation of nations, the idea of which Henry IV. never had : the foundation of all religion, and its necessity; that man could not well bear completely clear truth, and required to be kept in order ; the possibility, however, of a more happy condition, if the numerous feuds ceased, which were occasioned by too complicated constitutions (such as the German), and the intolerable burden suffered by states from excessive armies. A great deal more besides was said, and indeed we spoke of almost every country and nation. The Emperor spoke at first in his usual manner ; but the more interesting our conversation became, he spoke in a lower and lower tone, so that I was obliged to bend myself quite down to his face ; and no man can have understood what he said (and therefore many things I will not repeat). I opposed him occasionally, and he entered into discussion. Quite impartially and truly, as before God, I must say, that the variety of his knowledge, the acuteness of his observations, the solidity of his understanding (not dazzling wit), his grand and comprehensive views, filled me with astonishment, and his manner of speaking to me, with love for him. A couple of marshals, and also the Duke of Benevento, had entered in the meantime ; he did not break off. After five quarters, or an hour and a half, he allowed the concert to begin ; and I know not, whether accidentally or from goodness, he desired pieces, which, one of them especially, had reference to pastoral life and the Swiss (*Rans des Vaches*). After this he bowed in a friendly manner, and left the room. Since the audience with Frederick (1782), I never had a conversation on such a variety of subjects, at least with any prince : if I can judge correctly from recollection, I must give the Emperor the preference in point of solidity and comprehension ; Frederick was somewhat Voltairian. Besides there is in his tone much firmness and vigour, but in his mouth something as attractive and fascinating as in Frederick. It was one of the most remarkable days of my life. By his genius and disinterested goodness he has also conquered me."

no great battle fought, nor any extraordinary manœuvre executed. He had not in fact an equal enemy to contend with. The only striking feature of the period was the dilatory advance and disastrous retreat of Sir John Moore and the English under his command. Napoleon left Paris on the 29th of October, and reached Bayonne on the 3rd of November. On the 7th he was at Vittoria, where his brother Joseph had remained, and where he found himself in the midst of the army under Marshal Bessieres. The troops now moved forward on Burgos, which place was taken by assault, and treated with severity, the inhabitants firing from their windows on the French troops as they entered. At the same time Marshal Victor marched on the Spanish forces collected under General Blake at Espinosa, attacked and routed them, and drove them back on Reynosa. This disaster included the defeat of the greater part of the troops that had escaped with the Marquis Romana from the isle of Funen in the Baltic, and who, being injudiciously brought into action by single battalions, perished ingloriously among the cliffs at Espinosa. Blake commanded the Spanish army in the north of Spain ; Castanos in the centre near Madrid ; Palafox in the east towards the Pyrenees. Nothing can exceed the picture which is given of the deplorable state of these armies at the period in question. They were without discipline, concert, stores, or ammunition. The soldiers were in a state of open rebellion against their leaders, and slew them on the slightest suspicion or disgust : the generals were at variance alike with one another and with the Supreme Junta. The latter sent commissioners to the army who acted as spies and umpires over the generals, and urged them forward on sure destruction, at their peril. They seemed to have nothing to sustain their courage but their good opinion of themselves and their hatred of the French, with the love of their king and country—though the last could scarcely be affirmed, for their

patriotism was often of so instinctive and merely animal a nature that they fought very well in defence of a particular spot, but could not understand the necessity of a combined system of national defence or of securing the frontiers as an inlet to the whole kingdom. Palafox having effected a junction with Castanos is said to have hurried him by opprobrious insinuations into a general action with the French troops stationed along the Ebro. It took place at Tudela on the 22nd of November, with all the results which Castanos had foretold, and left that general no resource but to escape with the broken relics of his army to Calatayud, while Palafox retreated to Saragossa to await a second siege and reap thankless renown. The road now lay open to Madrid except for the pass of Somma-Sierra, about ten miles from the city, and which was hitherto regarded as impregnable. Buonaparte might indeed have gone round by Valladolid, on which side no such formidable obstacle intervened. But as the Spaniards were fond of miracles, he was willing to gratify them ; and to their utter astonishment, took the pass of Somma-Sierra by a single charge of Polish lancers. After this, not a single Spaniard was to be seen all the way to Madrid, where the army arrived on the 1st of December. Madrid is not fortified ; but some persons thought of defending it piecemeal and man to man. I have no objection that all the capitals in the world should be defended in this manner (if it is so to be understood) but feel no particular regret that Madrid was not more than any other, as I have no particular fancy either for *auto-da-fés* or bull fights. Some of the streets were however unpaved for this purpose ; and the looks of the citizens spoke daggers. It ended in nothing, as the constituted authorities with Don Tomas Morla at their head were not disposed to second the good citizens of Madrid, which capitulated in the morning of the 4th of December, after a number of parleys. The only attempt at an irregular defence

was made in the new barracks belonging to the guards. The common people and soldiers had collected here to the amount of several thousands, determined to make a last stand : a redoubt situated in the middle of the inner court was garnished with cannon and vomited out death on all who approached. It was not till after the lapse of a couple of hours that the corregidor and alcaldes could get near enough to summon them to lay down their arms in consequence of the capitulation having been signed. In their despair, the combatants broke their muskets, spiked the guns, and rushed out of the place frantic with rage and disappointment. The gate of Fuencarral opposite the quarter where Buonaparte was chiefly stationed, continued to fire after all the other points of defence had done firing. The commander of this post was found to be a M. St. Simon, a French emigrant, who had been in the Spanish service ever since the Revolution. He was about to be brought before a military commission and would probably have suffered for his over-forward zeal in the cause of Spanish patriotism, if his daughter had not been advised to present herself before the Emperor, and intercede for her father's life. This sort of appeal he hardly ever was known to resist. Before quitting Madrid, Buonaparte paid a visit privately to the royal palaces, where he found his brother Joseph's picture remaining where it was, and a curious collection of clocks and watches with which the late king used to amuse himself for hours.

Sir John Moore and his army had been expected in Spain towards the end of August, and might in that case have co-operated to advantage with the Spanish troops; but indecision and a want of vigour in the administration (which was not prompt in the use of means from having hitherto used them in vain) produced a delay which amounted to a virtual abandonment of the project. He himself arrived with sixteen thousand men at Salamanca, entering Spain

by the frontiers of Portugal, and had ordered Sir David Baird to advance from Corunna to Astorga with ten thousand more, just in time to hear of the defeat and dispersion of the Spanish armies under Blake, Castanos, and Palafox, whom he was come to join and reinforce. In this situation he was greatly at a loss how to act. He saw the danger of attempting to advance; yet the expectations entertained of him, and the eagerness of the British public to second a cause which had at last brought something like a feeling of liberty and a spirit of independence to bolster up the hypocritical excuses and selfish calculations on which they had so far trafficked in war, made him desirous to do something. He consulted Mr. Frere, the British minister and a sort of itinerant camp-critic and writer of dispatches (of the Canning school) who advised him to proceed by all means and risk everything for the chance of succouring Madrid. Mr. Frere was a wit, a courtier, and an enthusiast in the cause of Spanish liberty; for he saw with what a different eye courts and cabinets must regard that liberty or will of the people which consisted in their determination to have no will of their own, but to leave all power in the hands of kings and priests, and that other sort of liberty which France had tried to obtain, of having a will of her own and taking some of the supreme power out of the hands of those that held it. One of these two kinds of patriotism or liberty, which was both courtly and popular, was the finest opening and handle in the world for overturning the other which had never been courtly and had ceased to be popular. Sir John Moore, who was not of the Canning school, having some misgivings of the cause and more of the success, declined this challenge of the British envoy. He notwithstanding resolved to move forward, in the hope of aiding the scattered remains of Romana's army in Biscay, of diverting the attention of the French from advancing farther south, and thinking at all events to keep a retreat open for

himself through Galicia. This last step soon became necessary. He had gone on to Mayorga, where, on the 20th of December, he formed a junction with Sir David Baird; and advancing to Sahagun, a smart action took place between the 15th English hussars and a body of French cavalry, greatly to the advantage of the former. The troops were in the highest spirits and preparing to attack Soult, who had concentrated his forces behind the Carrion, when news was brought that this general had been strongly reinforced; that Buonaparte had set out on the 22nd from Madrid at the head of ten thousand of the guard; and that the French armies, who had been marching southward, had halted and taken a direction to the northwest, as if to inclose and destroy the British army. A retreat became inevitable, with every disadvantage of such a retreat, in the middle of winter, through bad roads, and a country of which our officers at the time did not know how to take advantage, either for the purposes of defence or of furnishing their troops with supplies. The gross deficiency of our commissariat department at that epoch has been accounted for from our insular situation, which, screening us from the necessity of foreign wars, leaves us ignorant of the means of subsisting large armies by land, and may also bring into question our right to engage in them, since we can hardly feel properly responsible for the evils which we inflict with comparative impunity upon others. The soldiers, besides, not relishing this retrograde movement, grew mutinous, got drunk, and committed all sorts of outrages upon the inhabitants. Nothing brought them to reason or put them in good humour, but the prospect of meeting with the enemy. They then rallied and fought with the greatest bravery and steadiness. On the 29th of December the French, who had pressed upon our rear at Benevente and thrown a large body of the imperial cavalry across the Exla, were driven back and defeated, and their general, Lefebvre Desnouettes, was taken prisoner. At

Lugo again, on the 6th of January, they declined the offer of a similar encounter ; and in embarking at Corunna on the 16th, the combat which Soult commenced with great boldness and numbers, proved fatal to many of the assailants and to the English general (Sir John Moore) while encouraging his soldiers to make sure of the victory. He was buried on the ramparts, and “left alone with his glory”—such as it was!

Buonaparte did not follow the retreating army further than Astorga. He then returned to Valladolid, where he staid some days, and then proceeded in great haste to Paris, his return being hastened by the news of an approaching rupture with Austria. While at Valladolid he had several conferences with the Abbé de Pradt, who made him laugh by comparing the ingratitude of the Spaniards for the benefits he wished to confer upon them to the behaviour of Sganarelle’s wife in the farce, who quarrels with a stranger for trying to prevent her husband from beating her. He also suppressed a monastery of Dominicans at Valladolid, where a French officer had been assassinated and his body found in the vaults of the convent. He called these monks before him to the number of forty; harangued and reviled them for their baseness; and at last in his eagerness got alone in the midst of them, some of them in their humility kneeling to kiss the hem of his garments. Had there been one true monk among the group, the scene might have ended differently—though less satisfactorily to some people than it has done!

## CHAPTER XLI.

## CAMPAIGN IN 1809.

Talleyrand displaced ; hostilities commenced by the Austrians ; Napoleon crosses the Rhine : famous manœuvre of Abensberg ; battle of Eckmuhl ; Napoleon struck by a spent-ball ; retreat of the Archduke Charles to Bohemia ; Vienna capitulates ; battle of Aspern ; battle of Wagram ; the war in the Tyrol ; English expedition to Antwerp and Walcheren ; peace concluded at Schonbrunn ; attempt to assassinate Napoleon.

NAPOLEON returned to Paris on the 23rd of January 1809. His prefect of the palace (whose mule had suffered an accident in fording the Exla) followed him on the 28th. One of the first persons the latter met on going to the Tuileries was the Count de Montesquieu, who had been appointed grand-chamberlain to the Emperor in the place of the prince of Benevento. This news surprised M. de Bausset the more, as he had just parted with M. Talleyrand, who had come to pay his court, and on whose countenance he had perceived no marks of the change nor of the disagreement that had caused it.

In the course of the preceding year, Austria, seeing the example set by Spain and that liberty was the word, grew patriotic, got tired of the treaty of Presburg (of which she was glad enough at the time) seized and opened the French dispatches in time of peace, raised the *Landwert*, made an appeal to her subjects, and hoped to recover, under this new plea of popular enthusiasm and national independence, the successive losses she had sustained in so many coalitions to overturn popular rights and national independence, and bow them to the earth under

the yoke of feudal aristocracy with its forty quarterings. The scheme failed this time too. England of course was at hand to encourage her to venture once more in the new lottery which legitimacy had opened, and offered as usual to pay the expense. The distress and poverty arising from the want of this money at present is attributed to the excessive and unnatural growth of the population. We are too poor now to take part in the struggle of Greece or other states to emancipate themselves from a despotic and hated yoke. There has been no king's head struck off in the quarrel, and it is not to be expected that the king's coin should pay for any thing else. "But riches fineless were as poor as winter," without that fillip to warm the icy chill of patriotism and set the sluggish blood in motion.

The Archduke Charles was appointed generalissimo; and early in the month of April published the Emperor's orders to march into Bavaria and treat all that opposed him as enemies. The same declaration was also made with respect to Russia. Accordingly, the Austrian troops entered the Bavarian territory on the 10th and 11th of April, though Prince Metternich was still at Paris without demanding his passports or saying a word on the subject. *It was an understood case.* A telegraphic dispatch gave the first notice of this event. Napoleon set out for Strasburg on the 13th, and arrived there on the 16th at four in the morning with the Empress Josephine, whom he left there. He crossed the Rhine at the head of his fine troops, and marched with the utmost speed to the succour of Bavaria. Numbers were on the side of the Austrians (who had raised a larger army in this case than they had ever done before), but Buonaparte made up for this inferiority (as was his custom) by the celerity and skill of his movements. He had with him, besides his own troops, those of the Confederation of the Rhine (who proved faithful to their conqueror and ally), and also drew reinforcements from

the garrisons he had left in Prussia and in the north of Germany. The Austrians had six *corps d'armée* of thirty thousand each, which constituted their force, under the Archduke Charles; one in Galicia, under the Archduke Ferdinand, ready to oppose the Russians, should they be disposed to advance; and two under the Archduke John, intended to operate a diversion in Italy, by the passes of Carinthia and Carniola—in all two hundred and seventy thousand men. Buonaparte's line had been too much extended (considering the fewness of his numbers) from north to south; and a gap was left in the middle, into which the Austrians (if they had thought of it in time) might have pushed large masses, and have thus cut his army in two. Alarmed at the possibility of this, he hastened to place himself in the centre, the vulnerable point; and turning doubtful hazards and even oversights to his advantage, sent precise and urgent orders to Massena to advance by a lateral movement from Augsburg to Pfaffenhofen, and to Davoust to come up in the same manner from Ratisben to Neustadt. The order for this daring operation was given on the night of the 17th, and speed and vigilance were recommended. Davoust had to march eight leagues and Massena twelve or thirteen to come up to the appointed place of rendezvous. When the time necessary for executing these movements had elapsed, Buonaparte at the head of the centre of his forces made a sudden and desperate assault on two Austrian divisions, commanded by General Hiller and the Archduke Louis; and Davoust coming up on the right flank of the Austrians in the middle of the engagement, while Massena made his appearance almost at the same instant in the rear of the Archduke Louis, broke and threw their whole line into the utmost disorder. This was the famous manœuvre of Abensberg, of which the Emperor sometimes spoke as the finest of all his conceptions. This victory, gained on the 20th of April, exposed the defeated army to further

misfortunes, the Emperor following up his advantage, and attacking the fugitives next day at Landshut, where they lost thirty pieces of cannon and nine thousand prisoners, besides ammunition and baggage.

On the 22nd, the Emperor directed his whole force, meeting from different points, against the principal army of the Archduke Charles which was concentrated at Eckmuhl. The battle was one of the most splendid which the art of war could display. A hundred thousand men and upwards were dispossessed of all their positions by the combined attacks of their scientific adversary, the divisions appearing on the field, each in its due place and order, as regularly as the movements of the various pieces on a chess-board. All the Austrian wounded, great part of their artillery, fifteen stand of colours, and twenty thousand prisoners remained in the power of the French. The retreat was attended with proportionable loss ; and Austria, again baffled in the hope of wreaking her old grudge against France, was once more reduced to contend for her existence, which had been so often lost and given back to her to have the same unfair use-made of it again.

On the subsequent day, the Austrians attempted to cover the retreat of their army by defending Ratisbon. A partial breach in the walls having been obstinately defended by a close discharge of musketry, there was a difficulty in finding volunteers to renew the attack, when the noble-minded Lannes, seizing a ladder and rushing forward to fix himself against the walls, "I will show you," he exclaimed, "that your general is still a grenadier." The example prevailed ; the wall was surmounted ; and the combat was continued in the streets of the town. Here a singular circumstance occurred. A body of French, pressing forward to charge a body of Austrians who still occupied one end of a burning street, were interrupted by some waggons belonging to the enemy's artillery-train. "They are barrels of powder," cried the Austrian.

commander to the French: "if the flames reach them, both sides perish." The combat ceased; and the two parties joined in averting a danger which must have been fatal to both, and finally saved the ammunition from the flames. At length the Austrians were driven out of Ratisbon, leaving much cannon, baggage, and a great many prisoners in the hands of their enemies.

In the middle of the last *melée*, Buonaparte who was observing the affair at some distance and speaking to Duroc at the time, was struck on the foot by a spent musket-ball, which occasioned a severe contusion. "That must have been a Tyrolese," said the Emperor coolly, "who has hit me from such a distance: those fellows fire with wonderful precision." Those around remonstrated with him on his exposing his person: to which he answered, "What can I do? I must needs see how matters go on." The soldiers crowded about him, alarmed at the report of his wound; but he would not allow it to be dressed, so eager was he to get on horseback, and put an end to the solicitude of the troops by showing himself publicly among them.

Thus within five days (the space and almost the very days of the month which Buonaparte had assigned for settling the affairs of Germany) the original aspect of the war was entirely changed; and Austria, from the character of an aggressor in which she was proud of appearing, was compelled to submit to one which she hated and to which custom had not reconciled her. At no period of his dazzling career did the genius of Napoleon seem more completely to prostrate all opposition: at no time perhaps did the talents of a single individual exercise such an influence on the fate of the world. The forces which he had in the field had been not only unequal in numbers to those of the enemy; but they were in a military point of view misplaced and imperfectly combined. Napoleon arrived alone; found himself under all

these disadvantages ; and by his unrivalled genius came in the course of five days in complete triumph out of a struggle which bore to any one else a character so unpromising. It was no wonder that others, nay that he himself should have annexed to his person the degree of superstitious reverence claimed for the chosen instruments of destiny, whose path must not be crossed, and whose arm cannot be arrested.

While the relics of the Archduke Charles's army were in full retreat to Bohemia, Napoleon employed the 23rd and 24th of April in reviewing his troops and distributing honours and rewards with a liberal hand. It was on occasions like these that he was seen to the utmost advantage : if sometimes too much of the soldier among sovereigns, no one could pretend with so good a right to be a sovereign among soldiers. "I create you a knight : what is your name ?" he said to a soldier, striking him familiarly on the cheek. "You ought to know it well," answered the soldier, "since I am the man who in the deserts of Syria, when you were in extremity, relieved you from my flask." Napoleon instantly recollected the individual and the circumstance : "I make you a knight," he said, "with an annuity of twelve hundred francs—what will you do with so much money ?" "Drink with my comrades to the health of him who is so necessary to us." The generals had their share in the imperial bounty, particularly Davoust, to whose brilliant execution of the manœuvres commanded by Napoleon the victory was in a great measure to be attributed. He was created Duke of Eckmuhl. Napoleon by connecting the names of the places where great battles were fought with the titles of those who contributed to gain them, allied the recollection of their merits with his own grateful acknowledgment of them ; and made every new title he conferred a powerful spur to fresh exertions in the path of honour and ambition.

The Archduke Charles after the defeat at Eckmuhl

threw himself into the defiles and mountainous passes of Bohemia, where he could have made a protracted defence, had Buonaparte chosen to follow him. But instead of entangling himself in the pursuit, being in possession of the right bank of the Danube and of the high road to that city, he marched straight to Vienna. It is true, General Hiller, who had been repulsed at Landshut, had been joined by a considerable reserve and was placed between him and the capital : the Archduke, should he advance, might hang upon his rear ; a strong spirit of discontent loured like a black cloud over the mountains of the Tyrol ; and the north of Germany had begun to manifest a feeling of soreness and resistance to the galling pressure of evils which they had intended for others, but had never meant should come home to themselves. These doubtful considerations, which might have staggered a man of less resolution than Buonaparte, only accelerated his determination to compel Austria to a peace, by descending the Danube and occupying her capital a second time. All was shortly in motion. General Hiller, too weak to attempt the defence of the Inn, retreated to Ebersberg, a village with a castle upon the river Traun, a position which was deemed next to impregnable, and into which the Austrians had thrown thirty thousand men. It was carried by Massena on the 3rd of May in a furious assault, in which the loss was nearly equal to the victors and the vanquished. General Hiller retired to St. Polten and crossed the Danube at Muntern, hoping to effect his junction with the Archduke on the left bank, and leaving the right open to Buonaparte's march on Vienna. This city has no other fortifications than those which defended it against the Turks in 1683. The Archduke Maximilian had the command of the garrison, which was not numerous enough to hold out against the enemy. The Emperor and the greater part of his family had fled to Buda in Hungary ; only one remained behind, the Archduchess Marie-Louise,

who was confined by indisposition, and soon after destined to be carried away as a hostage and a bride. The shower of bombs first fell on the palace, but as soon as Buonaparte was apprised of the situation of the archduchess, the palace was spared, and the storm of missiles directed to other quarters. The intention of defending the capital was not long persisted in ; the archduke with his troops evacuated the city, and the capitulation was signed on the 12th.\* Buonaparte did not enter Vienna, but fixed his head-quarters at

\* The rapid capture of this city was due to the successful tenacity of Lannes and Murat, two men who yielded to each other in nothing where bravery and daring were concerned. A bold artifice of these marshals prevented the destruction of the bridge of the Thabor at Vienna ; without this the French army could not have gained possession of the capital without considerable difficulty. This act of courage and presence of mind, which had so great an influence on the events of the campaign, was afterwards related by Lannes, who spoke of it with an air of gaiety, and was more delighted with having outwitted the Austrians, than proud of the brilliant action which he had performed. Bold enterprises were so natural to him, that he was frequently the only person who saw nothing extraordinary in his own exploits.

"I was one day," says Lannes, "walking with Murat on the right bank of the Danube, and we observed on the left bank, which was occupied by the Austrians, some works going on, the evident object of which was to blow up the bridge on the approach of our troops. The fools had the impudence to make these preparations under our very noses ; but we gave them a good lesson. Having arranged our plan, we returned to give orders, and I entrusted the command of my column of grenadiers to an officer on whose courage and intelligence I could rely. I then returned to the bridge, accompanied by Murat, and two or three other officers. We advanced unconcernedly, and entered into conversation with the commander of a post in the middle of the bridge. We spoke to him about an armistice which was to be speedily concluded. While conversing with the Austrian officers, we contrived to make them turn their eyes towards the left bank, and then, agreeably to the orders we had given, my column of grenadiers advanced on the bridge. The Austrian cannoneers, on the left bank, seeing their officers in the midst of us, did not dare to fire, and my column advanced at a quick step. Murat and I at the head of it gained the left bank. All the combustibles prepared for blowing up the bridge were thrown into the river ; and my men took possession of the batteries erected for the defence of the bridge head. The poor devils of Austrian officers were perfectly astounded when I told them they were prisoners."

Schönbrunn, a palace of the Emperor's in the vicinity. The Archduke Charles, unable to prevent the fall of Vienna, now thought only of relieving it.

He approached the left bank of the Danube, therefore, which had been swollen by the rains and melting of the snow, and over which the bridges had been destroyed to prevent the enemy from passing at their ease, as they had done in 1805. Buonaparte, who was on the right bank, anxious to give battle to the Archduke and put an end to the contest, endeavoured to pass over first at Neusdorf about half a league above Vienna (where the stream is narrow and rapid)—but failing in the attempt (five hundred men whom he pushed across having been cut off and taken) he proceeded to a place called Ebersdorf, two leagues below Vienna, where the Danube is divided into five branches, and here had a bridge thrown across the islands which form them, the large Isle of Lobau being the last or next to the left bank of the river. The archduke did not seem disposed to interrupt the construction of the bridges or the passage of the river. On the 19th, Buonaparte hastened the finishing of the last bridge, and on the 20th passed over with about thirty thousand infantry and six thousand horses, occupying a little plain between the villages of Aspern to the left and Essling on the right. Aspern was half a mile, Essling a mile and three quarters from the bridge. These villages, with a redoubt hastily constructed to guard the bridge, were occupied by the French.

The reports brought in during the night concerning the enemy were contradictory and uncertain. Many lights were seen on the heights of Bisamberg; but nearer to the French and in their front, the horizon exhibited a pale streak of about a league in length, the reflected light of numerous watch-fires, which a rising ground between prevented from being themselves visible. From such indications as could be collected, Lannes was of opinion that they had only

a strong rear-guard before them, while Massena maintained that they were in presence of the whole Austrian army. Napoleon was on horseback by break of day on the 21st to judge for himself; but clouds of light troops prevented his getting near enough to reconnoitre accurately. Presently the skirmishers were withdrawn, and the Austrians were seen advancing with their whole force, double in number to the French, and with two hundred and twenty pieces of artillery. Yet with this vast disproportion of odds, they were strangely astonished at the stand which they made on this occasion, as the French were mortified and reproached with having suffered a repulse or made only a drawn battle of it instead of a complete victory. The conflict commenced about four in the afternoon with a furious attack on the village of Aspern, which was taken and retaken several times, and at the close of the day remained (except the church and churchyard) in the possession of Massena, though on fire with the bombs and choked up with the slain. Essling was the object of three general attacks, against all which the French stood their ground. Lannes was at one time on the point of being overpowered, had not Napoleon by a sudden charge of cavalry come to his relief. Night separated the combatants. The next day the battle was renewed, each party having received reinforcements. The French retook the church of Aspern; but the fighting was as obstinate and sanguinary as ever. Buonaparte observing that the Austrians bent all their force on the village of Aspern on their right, keeping back their left and centre, concluded that the last were their feeblest points, and came to the immediate resolution of moving forward the whole French centre and right wing, in hopes of overpowering and out-flanking them on their weak side. The Austrian line was in danger of being turned and pierced by this movement. The Archduke Charles with equal presence of mind and intrepidity hastened

to the spot where the shock was greatest ; filled up the chasms which had been made in his line with the reserve ; and seizing a standard, himself led the grenadiers to the charge. Thus stood the battle doubtful but fearful to the Austrians, when suddenly the bridge which Buonaparte had established over the Danube was swept away by the flood.

This accident made it necessary for the French general to think of measures for securing or restoring his communications with the right bank. Fortunately for him, that end of the bridge which connected the Isle of Lobau with the left bank on which they were fighting remained uninjured, and was protected by fortifications. This, together with the cannon of Essling and the extraordinary conduct and valour of the troops, enabled Buonaparte to withdraw the remains of his army into the Isle of Lobau and to establish himself there during the night. The loss on both sides had been dreadful, being conjectured at twenty thousand killed and wounded in each army. General St. Hilaire, one of the best French generals, was killed in the action, and Lannes mortally wounded was brought to die in the island. Both his legs had been shattered to pieces in the last assault ; yet he refused to die, and insisted that the surgeon ought to be hanged who could not cure a Marshal and Duke of Montebello. He could only be pacified when Buonaparte was near him, clung round him as if even death had not power to tear him from the god of his idolatry, and called upon his name to the last as if it were a spell to charm anguish and despair. It could not be that he who was called the Roland of the army was afraid of death ; but the memory of a hundred victories swelled in his bosom, and he had not yet slaked his thirst of glory ! Buonaparte lamented him much ; said he had found him a mere swordsman, but that he soon rose to the highest rank in his profession, and would have improved still more had he

lived ; and (what was the highest praise of all) spoke of him as one of those who, he felt confident, would not have deserted him in his misfortunes ! \*

\* "After the Duke de Montebello had received his death wound, at the battle of Essling, he was transported on a litter from the field, when, being perceived by Napoleon, the latter, taking the marshal in his arms, burst into tears, exclaiming : 'Montebello, dost thou recollect me ?' 'Yes, sire,' answered the duke ; 'and you have lost your best friend.' 'No, no,' interrupted Buonaparte with energy, 'thou shalt yet live !' Then turning towards M. Larry, his own surgeon, he continued, 'Is it not true—do you not answer for his life ?'

"In the midst of all the anxieties of the day, Napoleon gave himself up to the expression of that tender friendship which, during so many years, he had cherished for this brave companion in arms. Tears rolled down his manly cheeks ; and turning to those who surrounded him, he said :—' My heart required such a painful stroke as this, to make me occupy myself, on this day, with any other care than that of my army.' The Duke of Montebello was insensible, but recovering himself in the presence of Buonaparte, he embraced him, and said :—' Within an hour you will have lost him who dies with the glory and the consolation of being your best friend.'

"This touching scene, which occurred upon the field of battle, reanimated the drooping spirits of the unfortunate wounded, who, exerting their utmost efforts, and with difficulty raising themselves from the ground, vociferated, 'Long live Napoleon !'

"During the last interview which the Duke de Montebello had with Buonaparte, soon after the above interesting scene, after having reminded him of all the services rendered to him, and the numerous proofs of devotedness displayed towards him, he thus terminated his discourse. 'It is not to interest thee on behalf of my wife and my children that I thus address thee. In dying for thee I have no cause to make such appeals ; it is a duty thou owest to thy glory to protect them, nor do I fear to change thy intentions towards them, by addressing to thee the last "reproaches of friendship." Thou hast just committed a very great fault, it deprives thee of thy best friend, but it will not serve to correct thee. Thy insatiable ambition will prove thy downfall ; thou sacrificest without reason and without regret, those very men who serve thee the best, and thine ingratitude estranges from thee even those who admire thee ; thou art no longer environed in by flatterers, I do not perceive one friend who dares to tell thee the truth. Thou wilt be sold, thou wilt be abandoned : terminate speedily this war ; it is the wish of thy generals, and it is doubtless that of thy people also. Thou wilt never be more powerful, and thou mayest still be much better loved. Forgive, Napoleon, these home truths from a dying man ; he who, with his latest breath, cherished thee !'

"As the marshal pronounced these words, Buonaparte wept bitterly."

On the morning of the 23rd, the day after the bloody battle of Aspern, Napoleon found himself cooped up with his wounded and diminished forces in the island of Lobau and another smaller one, facing Enzersdorf, separated from the left bank by a channel only forty yards wide. His communication with Davoust and the troops on the right bank was completely cut off by the breaking down of the bridges the day before. Here, had the enemy been as alert in improving their advantages as he was in repairing his disasters, he might have been assailed and overpowered ; yet the archduke in these circumstances did nothing, but remained spell-bound by the recollections of so many former defeats, provoked and sustained. Buonaparte, on the other hand, set to work with unexampled activity, undismayed by his situation, patient of his repulse, submitting to necessity and mastering it as the horse is tamed by the rider ; and on the morning of the second day had re-established his communication with Davoust ; had converted the Isle of Lobau into an entrenched camp, defended by battering-cannon from surprise or storm ; and had constructed three bridges lower down (either unsuspected or unopposed by the Austrians, who still persisted in their first persuasion that he had no other mode of communication with the left bank than the bridge near Aspern) by which he sallied forth a few days after to be once more the assailant and the victor. He might be said to laugh at defeat ; and the impediments or stumbling-blocks thrown in his way were only the 'vantage-ground from which he returned to the charge with increased vigour and success.

New and formidable reinforcements were expected to join the combatants. The Archduke John had been successful over the Viceroy in Italy, and had compelled him to retire upon the Adige, till the news of the defeat at Eckmuhl made him hasten back through Hungary to his brother's assistance. He was followed by Eugene Beauharnais, who gained

the frontiers of Hungary as soon as he did ; and the town of Raab surrendering after a siege of eight days opened the road for the Viceroy to join the Emperor ; while the Archduke John crossing the Danube at Presburg below Vienna, hastened forward to effect his junction with the Archduke Charles. Napoleon did not allow him time. On the 5th of July, at ten o'clock at night, the French began to cross from the islands in the Danube to the left-hand bank, either in gun-boats, which silenced the Austrian batteries, or over the new bridges which were out of reach of their fire. At daylight the archduke had the unpleasant surprise of finding the whole French army on the left bank of the river, after having turned the fortifications which he had erected to oppose their passage. Essling and Enzersdorf were taken, and the French line of battle was formed on the extremity of the archduke's left wing. He endeavoured to outflank their right in turn, while the French made a push to break the Austrian centre stationed at Wagram, of which village only one house remained standing, and which was occupied by the Archduke Charles, when night closed the battle. Courier upon courier was sent to the Archduke John to hasten his march. On the next day, the 6th of July, was fought the famous battle of Wagram, in which the archduke committed the error of extending his line too much. The enemy perceived this advantage, and Lauriston with a hundred pieces of cannon having broken through the centre, and Davoust turning the whole left wing at the same time, decided the victory. Napoleon was everywhere in the hottest of the fight, though the appearance of his retinue drew on him a shower of grape by which he was constantly endangered. He rode along in front of the line upon a horse as white as snow, called the Euphrates, and which had been a present from the Sophi of Persia. The shots were flying in every direction ; and one of them hit Marshal Bessieres, who fell from his horse as if struck by a thunderbolt. Buonaparte seeing it, and thinking he was killed, turned away and said, "Let

us avoid another scene," in allusion to Marshal Lannes. He complained that the cavalry towards the close of the action did not do their duty, and had deprived him of the fruits of his victory. Murat's absence was felt, who instead of brandishing a sword was at this time wielding his new Neapolitan sceptre. The French took twenty thousand prisoners, and so complete was the discomfiture that when the Archduke John came up with a part of his army before the battle was quite over, he was glad to retire from the field unnoticed by the enemy. All hope of further resistance was now abandoned by the Austrian generals and government; and they concluded an armistice with Buonaparte at Znaim, by which they agreed to evacuate the Tyrol, and put the citadels of Brunn and Gratz into the hands of Napoleon as pledges of their sincerity in demanding peace.

While Buonaparte was striking these body-blows at the coalition, its extremities seemed to feel the quivering and convulsive throes of a last expiring agony. The war in the Tyrol assumed a romantic and picturesque character, corresponding with the habits of the natives and the nature of the scenery. The following touching account of the condition of the people is given by one whom (when he indulges the untrammelled bent of his mind) no one can equal in beauty or in power. "The extremes of rank and wealth are unknown in those pastoral districts: they have almost no distinction among the inhabitants; neither nobles nor serfs, neither office-bearers nor dependents; in one sense neither rich nor poor. Their magistrates in peace and leaders in war were no otherwise distinguished from the rest of the nation than by their sagacity and general intelligence. As great a degree of equality as is perhaps consistent with the existence of society is to be found in the Tyrol." And we are to be tantalised with this picture, made studiously mild and amiable, not as a foil, but as a cover to the designs of despotism; and by one whom the same words of liberty and equality, used in any

other connexion and for any other purpose, would throw into the rage and hysterics of a fine lady who sees a toad or spider near her. The poor Tyrolese did not know that it was the attempt to extend this model of "the best possible" state of society for the benefit of the common kind, and the determination of their lordly masters to trample on and crush that spark of hope that threatened the downfall of all that is corrupt and odious in governments again and again thrown back in defeat and dismay on the aggressors' heads, that at length brought the tide of war and conquest into the remote recesses of their mountain fastnesses (free for that reason) and rudely tore asunder all their previous habits and connexions. If there is anything that could wound the ears of absolute sovereigns, it must be the shrill cry of liberty raised in their defence, when they know it is the fixed purpose to destroy and betray its very name, on which they have staked, and are still ready to stake, their own existence, and that of all belonging to them. The lords of the earth must be sunk low indeed, when they are obliged to appeal to the people to raise them from the dust. No wonder they so soon resent the interposition of their subjects as an impertinence or dangerous freedom at best. The Austrian government felt so little sympathy with the Tyrolese, that at the peace they were given up without any reluctance to their fate; and Hofer with thirty others of these plebeian volunteers in the cause of legitimacy, expiated their mistake in not knowing their own side of the question, as rebels and traitors on the scaffold. While the Archduke John proceeded into Italy to awaken the loyalty of the inhabitants in favour of their old masters, the Archduke Ferdinand advanced northward to kindle the patriotism of the Poles in favour of their new oppressors. He had overrun the duchy of Warsaw, and might have made a present of his share of the partition of Poland to the King of Prussia, had not the royal hands been at this time tied up from

receiving back that recent and equitable acquisition. At the same time Katt, Schill, and Dornberg raised the standard of revolt in the north of Germany, and were resolved to set the King of Prussia free in spite of himself. After the battle of Eckmühl, he disavowed their proceedings, and they perished in the adventurous attempt to shake off their new subjection and to return in triumph and as avengers to their old bondage. These irregular and ungovernable ebullitions of loyalty and patriotism are well described as opposed to "that cold and passive slavery of mind which makes men as patient under a change of masters as the dull animal who follows with indifference any person who has the end of the halter in his hand." It is the change of masters that excites all the resistance and resentment: the attempt to shake off the slavery itself would call for greater indignation and an universal combination to crush it. Man is not the only animal that submits to slavery; but he is the only animal that runs mad for love of it! The Duke of Brunswick set up to play the antic about the same time, with his banners in mourning and his death's-heads emblazoned on them—"his was a fee-grief due to his single breast"—he had a father slain, as if he only had a father slain in that long and bloody contest which his father provoked and announced to Europe. The presumption implied under this mask of filial piety is the best comment on the principles in which he had been brought up. For sovereigns and princes to be in all other respects privileged and unlike other men is an old story; but that they should not be vulnerable to cannon-balls or that they should not die of their wounds, is new and paradoxical. If their being in this nice point liable to the common lot entails revenge and hatred on a whole nation who have dared to meet them in the field, really after this they have nothing more to do but to imitate the example of the Nayrs, who cry out to the Parias when they hear them coming to get out of

their way, lest if they should be contaminated with their sight, they should be obliged to kill them! The Duke of Brunswick, in spite of the risks he ran, and the desperateness of his undertaking, escaped by good fortune to England, "where the people were as mad as he;" and fell at last on that day which sealed the doom his father had foretold to France and freedom three-and-twenty years before!

We figured at this crisis by our well-known expedition to Antwerp and the island of Walcheren, which cost the lives of several thousand British troops cooped up in an unhealthy swamp; and (more alarming still) might have cost the lives of two of our British statesmen, who fought a duel about their share in the honour of that disastrous enterprise. Fouché (as minister of the interior for the time) did himself no good with his master by sending Bernadotte (who was at Paris in a sort of disgrace for claiming the merit of the battle of Wagram to himself) to take the command of forty thousand men hastily collected for the defence of Antwerp; and by boasting in a proclamation, that "however Napoleon might add by his genius to the glory of France, he was not necessary to enable Frenchmen to repel invaders from her soil." Russia showed an evident disinclination to join heartily as an ally with France against Austria, though none to complete the annexation of Finland to her empire or to march on the Turkish provinces of Moldavia and Wallachia with the connivance of France, which had been made the price of her alliance. Buonaparte saw through this conduct and the thin veil of professions which disguised it. "I must not give way," he said, "to a vain illusion. They have all sworn my ruin, but have not the courage to compass it." The Pope, too, played his cards with that instinctive cunning and evasive pertinacity with which power clings to its own maintenance or to the shadow of authority. His predecessor had proudly joined his banner to that of Austria and marched against France in 1796: he

himself refused to join in any quarrel with the English (though heretics) as universal father of the Christian church. Thus zeal for Holy Church or Christian charity by dictating alternately neutrality or hostility pointed to one and the same end. Pius VII. refused peremptorily to man the fortress of Ancona against the English or to let French troops march from Naples through the Pope's territory to repel the invasion of Upper Italy by the Austrians. He was therefore dispossessed of his temporalities which he made use of to screen the enemies of France; and as he on this excommunicated the Emperor, he was conducted a prisoner first to Savona and afterwards to Fontainebleau, so as to place both the successor of Charlemagne and the successor of St. Peter in no very pleasant or creditable point of view.

By the treaty of Schönbrunn Austria gave up less than from the nature of her aggression and the losses she had sustained there was reason to expect. What she chiefly ceded were some states on the borders of Germany and Italy tending to strengthen the province of Illyria belonging to France, and her only seaport of Trieste, so as to cut off the possibility of her communication with England. The moderation of the terms and the length to which the conferences had run were afterwards supposed to be better understood when the intended marriage of Napoleon with the Archduchess Marie-Louise came to be known. The conferences were chiefly carried on by Buonaparte in person, who lavished every attention and courtesy on the Austrian commissioners, so that from his manner alone it was conjectured that something more than mere politics or territorial arrangements was on the carpet. This might however be a mere courtly conjecture, conjured up by brains ever on the watch for every turn of fortune. Yet it is certain that the serious steps towards a divorce dated from this period. Difficulties however sometimes arose, and the course of the negotiation did not run quite smooth; and, once in par-

ticular, Napoleon coming out of his room with the Prince of Neufchâtel was heard to say, "If they do not soon put an end to it, I will send for the Grand-Duke of Wurtzburg and place the imperial crown of Austria on his head." It was during this delay that he received the news of the battle of Talavera, which vexed him a good deal: and it was a month before he learnt the particulars, owing to the interruption of the communications between Bayonne and Madrid. On this occasion he said of the officers commanding in Spain, "Those men are very self-sufficient. I am allowed to possess some superiority of talent; and yet I never think I can have an army sufficiently numerous to fight a battle even with an enemy I have been accustomed to defeat. I collect about me all the troops I can bring together; they on the contrary advance boldly to attack an enemy with whom they are scarcely acquainted, and yet they only bring one half of their troops to the contest. Is it possible to manœuvre more awkwardly? I cannot be present everywhere. Had the three corps of Soult, Ney, and Mortier been with me, I should have given the Austrians work." At length, peace was signed; and the same day he sent for M. Champagny, minister of foreign affairs, who had been ostensibly carrying on a similar negotiation with Count Metternich at Altenburg: he asked M. Champagny if he had not been surprised at the little he had had to do at Altenburg and at the turn things had taken? The other replied, that "in his quality of minister of foreign affairs he indeed knew little of what was passing." The Emperor laughed, and seemed to enjoy the triumph over his minister: he set off for France two days after (16th of October) and on the 1st of November received the congratulations of the senate on having fixed the peace and happiness of the world on a solid and lasting basis.

While Buonaparte was at Schönbrunn, his life was in danger from one of those accidents to which per-

sons in his situation are always exposed. It was his custom to review the troops every morning in the court before the palace. He descended to the parade by a flight of steps and generally stopped at the bottom to speak to and receive petitions from different persons. One day, being anxious to review some French prisoners that had been exchanged, and wanting to interrogate them more particularly as to their situation, he did not pause in descending the steps of the palace, but passed on directly towards the troops. An individual, dressed in a plain blue frock and holding a paper in his hand, seeing that Napoleon did not stop, insisted on following him and presenting his petition himself. Berthier, who was in attendance on the Emperor, told him that he might deliver his petition when the review was over: Napoleon, taken up with his prisoners, did not perceive what was passing behind him. In spite of the recommendation of the Prince of Neufchâtel, the stranger continued to follow, pretending that the object of his petition did not admit of delay, and that he must speak with Napoleon himself. General Rapp, the aide-de-camp on duty, seeing that he still persevered and thrust himself in among the general officers who formed the Emperor's suite, seized him by the collar of his riding coat, at the same time loudly telling him to retire: in doing so, Rapp felt the handle of some instrument which this man carried in a side-pocket: he kept fast hold of him, and gave him in charge to two *gendarmes* to secure and take him to the guard-house. On examination a large knife was found upon him, with which he confessed it was his intention to assassinate the Emperor. Napoleon is said to have known nothing of what happened till he returned to the palace, when he ordered the man to be brought before him. He stated that he was the son of a Lutheran clergyman at Erfurt, and that he had left his own country to put in execution the design in which he had just failed, but he considered the attempt as the most glorious action

of his life. Napoleon asked, what harm he had done him? He answered, None ; but that he was the most cruel enemy of Germany, which he had ruined by the war he had waged against it. Buonaparte interrupted him by saying, " Why then did you not kill the Emperor, as he was the cause of the war, and not I?" He replied, " Oh ! he is a blockhead ; and if he were killed, another like him would be put upon the throne ; but if you were dead, it would not be easy to find such another."\* " But were I to pardon you," resumed Napoleon, " would you not in gratitude relinquish the idea of assassinating me ?" " I would not advise you," said this enthusiast, " for I have sworn your death." " Surely this man is mad," said the Emperor, and he had his physician Corvisart called to feel his pulse ; but he declared that it was quite steady and regular. The man was placed in confinement and kept without food or sleep for twenty-four hours to try if this would have any effect upon him. But he still refused to make any disclosures or to disavow his purpose for the future. Napoleon wished to have spared his life ; but the danger of the example and the man's obstinacy were insisted on as doing away the possibility of clemency in his case : he was afterwards tried and shot.

O'Meara gives another instance of the kind, which must have occurred about the same period or shortly after.

" Another time," proceeded the Emperor, " a letter was sent to me by the King of Saxony, containing information that a certain person was to leave Stuttgart

\* Popular power, when divided among the multitude, is destroyed and weakened by discord and factions ; when placed in the hands of an individual, it is endangered by aiming at him personally. Monarchical power has all the advantages of unity, and is safe from personal attack by its perpetuity. There is no getting rid of the race, however mischievous ; and the only way to keep the peace is by putting down or removing any one as a public nuisance to whom they have taken a dislike as standing in the way either of their momentary caprices or permanent authority. The alternative is no doubt a pleasant one.

on a particular day for Paris, where he would probably arrive on a day that was pointed out, and that his intentions were to murder me. A minute description of his person was also given. The police took its measures; and on the day pointed out he arrived. They had him watched. He was seen to enter my chapel, to which I had gone on the celebration of some festival. He was arrested and examined. He confessed his intentions and said, that when the people knelt down on the elevation of the host, he saw me gazing at the fine women; at first he intended to advance and fire at me (in fact he had advanced near to me at the moment); but upon a little reflection thought that would not be sure enough, and he determined to stab me with a knife which he had brought for the purpose. I did not like to have him executed, and ordered that he should be kept in prison. When I was no longer at the head of affairs, this man, who had been detained in prison for several months after I had left Paris, and ill-treated, I believe, got his liberty. Soon after, he said that his designs were no longer to kill me; but that he would murder the King of Prussia for having ill-treated the Saxons and Saxony. On my return from Elba I was to be present at the opening of the legislative body, which was to be done with great state and ceremony. When I went to open the chamber, this same man, who had got in, fell down by some accident, and a parcel containing some chemical preparation, exploded in his pocket, and wounded him severely. It never has been clearly ascertained what his intentions were at this time. It caused great alarm amongst the legislative body, and he was arrested. I have since heard that he threw himself into the Seine."

## CHAPTER XLII.

NAPOLEON'S DIVORCE FROM JOSEPHINE AND MARRIAGE  
WITH MARIE-LOUISE.

Returns to Paris ; informs Josephine of his intended divorce ; demands the hand of the Archduchess Marie-Louise ; the marriage celebrated by proxy at Vienna ; her reception by the French commissioners at Braunau ; ceremony of the transfer arranged by Napoleon ; meets his bride at Courcelles ; rejoicings at Paris ; accident at the Austrian ambassador's *fête* ; Louis Buonaparte resigns the throne of Holland ; birth of the King of Rome ; Prince of Wales appointed Regent of Great Britain ; Russia declares war against France.

NAPOLEON on leaving Schönbrunn returned to France by way of Munich, where he waited for the ratification of the treaty by Austria. To convey the intelligence as soon as possible, military posts were placed on the heights at certain distances, who were to give the signal by white flags in the day and by bonfires kindled at night. The news of the ratification came the third day of the Emperor's stay at the capital of Bavaria. He set out next day for Fontainebleau, where he arrived a few hours before the Empress, who had left Strasburg for Paris a month before. There were marks of uneasiness on her countenance, and an appearance of constraint in Napoleon's behaviour to her. She was alarmed at the circumstance of the private communication between her room and the Emperor's having been shut up. They returned to Paris on the 14th of November, where the presence of the King of Saxony sometimes relieved the awkwardness of a *tête-à-tête* ; but it was easy to remark a considerable alteration in the

features of the Empress and a silent reserve on the part of the Emperor.

The explanation took place on the 30th. Dinner had been served as usual. Josephine had on a large hat tied under the chin, which hid her face in part: but she seemed to have been weeping, and still had some difficulty to restrain her tears. She was the picture of grief. Neither party spoke during dinner, nor touched anything except for form's sake. Having asked what time it was, Napoleon rose and Josephine slowly followed him. Coffee was presented to him, and he made a sign to the attendants to retire. The chief of these (M. de Bausset) had hardly got into the outer room when all of a sudden he heard violent cries uttered by the Empress Josephine.\* Napoleon

\* "She was in a state of vague uncertainty, worse than death, until the fatal day, when Napoleon at length avowed to her what she had long before read in his looks. It was the 30th of November, 1809. 'Well do I remember,' said Josephine, 'the sinister expression of his countenance on that day: we were dining together, as usual, and during that sorrowful repast I had not uttered a word, and he had only broken silence to ask one of the servants what it was o'clock. As soon as Buonaparte had taken his coffee, he dismissed all his attendants, and I remained alone with him. His features sufficiently marked what was passing in his mind, and I knew that my hour of trial was come. Coming close to me, he took my hand, pressed it to his heart, and, after gazing at me for a few moments in silence, he uttered these fatal words: 'Josephine, my dear Josephine! you know I have loved you: to you alone do I owe the only moments of happiness I have tasted in this world. But, Josephine, my destiny is superior to my will; my dearest affections must give way to the interests of France.'—"Say no more," I exclaimed, "I understand you; I expected this; but the blow is not the less severe." I had not power to say more,' continued Josephine; 'I know not what took place after; strength and reason at once forsook me; and when I recovered I found myself in my chamber: Corvisart, and my poor daughter, were with me. Buonaparte came to see me in the evening; and oh! how can I give an idea of what I then felt?—even the interest he appeared to feel for my situation seemed an additional cruelty. Alas! I had good reason to fear ever becoming an empress!"

"Though more than a twelvemonth had elapsed since the divorce, it was still a new theme of grief in the heart of Josephine. 'You cannot conceive,' she often said, 'all the torments I have endured since that fatal day: I cannot think how I survived it. You can form no conception of the misery it is to me to see everywhere descriptions of fêtes. And the first time he came to see me after his

appearing at the door, said eagerly, "Come in, Bausset, and close the door." The Empress was stretched on the floor, venting the most pitiable complaints and saying, "No, I shall never survive it." Napoleon then said—"Are you strong enough to lift up Josephine and convey her to her own apartment, where she may have the assistance and attentions which her situation requires?" The officer of the household did as he was desired; and taking up the Empress in his arms with Napoleon's assistance, the latter led the way with a lamp that he had snatched from a table, through a passage which opened on the private staircase. Here M. de Bausset observing that he was afraid of falling with his load, the Emperor called to the keeper of the portfolio who stood night and day at the door of his cabinet, gave him the lamp, and himself took hold of Josephine's feet to enable his assistant to descend with greater safety. Josephine had breathed no complaint from the time she had been raised from the carpet in the drawing-room till she was placed on a sofa in her bed-room; she seemed to have fainted; but at one moment when descending the staircase, she said to M. de Bausset, "You hold me too tight"—and he then knew she was in no danger. As soon as assistance was procured, Napoleon withdrew into a small antechamber, where he manifested extreme agitation and distress of mind. In his anxiety he told the cause of what had happened, and addressed his attendant in these words: "The interest of France and of my dynasty has done a violence to my heart—the divorce has become an imperious duty upon me—

marriage—oh! what a meeting was that! what tears I shed! The days on which he comes are days of torture to me. How cruel of him to speak to me about his expected heir! you may suppose how distressing this is to me. Better to be exiled a thousand leagues from hence. However,' added Josephine, 'some few friends still continued faithful to me, and that is now my only consolation in the few moments I am able to admit of it.'"*—Memoirs of the Court of Josephine.*

I am so much the more hurt at the scene which Josephine has just exhibited, because three days ago she ought to have learnt from Hortense the melancholy obligation which condemns me to separate from her. I am grieved to the heart for her. I thought she had more firmness, and was not prepared for the excess of her sorrow." In speaking thus, his emotion was so great as to compel him to pause between each sentence to take breath. His words escaped with difficulty, his voice faltered, and the tears came into his eyes. He then sent for Corvisart, her daughter Hortense, Cambaceres, and Fouché: and went back to see if Josephine had come to herself. The feeling of weakness that overcame her on hearing her fate from the mouth of Napoleon was the only one into which she was betrayed. She was at this time six-and-forty, though her unalterable good temper and the sweetness of her expression still kept alive the appearance of youth. The goodness of her heart and the graces of her person and manners diffused a sunshine on all around her. She never was known to refuse an act of kindness that was in her power, or to say a disobliging thing to any one. She descended from the height to which she had been raised with calmness and dignity; and retired into private life, regretted by every one, if that could be called private life where she continued to retain the rank and magnificence of an Empress-dowager.

Some pretend that she was more at her ease, and (with her habits and turn of mind) happier in her new situation at Malmaison than at the Tuilleries. But no one is really the happier for being deprived of advantages which flatter the imagination of the individual, and which others look up to with envy as the highest point of felicity. It is true that while Empress she was often exposed to an infinity of petty formalities, and obliged to accommodate herself to the humours of persons she did not like. The Emperor's habits of business also frequently broke in upon the

regularity of ordinary life. Before she could sit down to dinner she had to wait for the Emperor, who deeply engaged, in other matters forgot the hours. Once in particular he forgot the notice which had been given him till eleven o'clock at night ; in coming out of his cabinet he said to Josephine, "I believe it is rather late?" "Past eleven," she replied, laughing. "I thought I had dined," said Napoleon, sitting down at the table. This sort of self-denial was a virtue which the Empress had often occasion to practise. Napoleon had some reason for saying, "I only gain battles, while Josephine by her goodness gains hearts." Buonaparte in speaking of the two Empresses, used to call one the *Graces* and the other *Innocence*. Marie-Louise did not much like him to visit Josephine after the divorce ; and if she suspected him of intending it, had recourse to a number of little artifices to prevent it. Once when he proposed to take her with the young King of Rome to see Josephine, she burst into a flood of tears. The jealousy which she manifested on this score appears, however, to have been a mere weakness without any malice in it.

As soon as the intended divorce was made known, Josephine kept her apartments, and no longer appeared in public. *Madame Mere* (Napoleon's mother) did the honours. She was however obliged to be present when *Te Deum* was chanted for the peace of Vienna (the consequences of which had been so melancholy to her) and also at the *fête* given on the same occasion by the city of Paris. On the sixteenth of December the project of the divorce was officially notified to the senate ;\* after which Josephine went

\* "The politics of my monarchy," said Napoleon, "the interest and the wants of my people, which have constantly guided all my actions, require, that after me I should leave to children, inheritors of my love for my people, that throne on which Providence has placed me. Notwithstanding, for several years past I have lost the hope of having children by my marriage with my well-beloved consort, the Empress Josephine. This is it which induces me to sacrifice the

to live at Malmaison, and Buonaparte retired for a few days to Trianon.\* On his return to Paris a council was held to consider of the most advantageous matrimonial alliance for France, and the majority of voices, according to a supposed previous understanding, were for Austria. This determination however did not pass without opposition. The Austrian ambassador, Prince Schwartzenburg, having been sounded, and a favourable answer given the same day, Count Lauriston, and soon after the Prince of Neufchâtel, were dispatched to Vienna to demand the hand of the Archduchess Marie-Louise in marriage with the Emperor. The consent of the Emperor of Austria having been obtained, and all the formalities gone through, the marriage was celebrated between the Archduchess and the Archduke Charles as proxy for the Emperor Napoleon on the 11th of March, 1810. She was to come to Braunau, a town situated on the frontiers of Austria and Bavaria, to be given in charge to persons appointed by the Emperor of the French; and here her ladies of honour and the French commissioner Berthier, with a magnificent retinue, were waiting to receive her. The ceremony actually

sweetest affections of my heart, to attend to nothing but the good of the state, and to wish the dissolution of my marriage. Having arrived at the age of forty years, I may indulge the hope of living long enough to educate, in my own views and sentiments, the children which it may please Providence to give me; God knows how much such a resolution has cost my heart; but there is no sacrifice which may be necessary for the welfare of France that I will not cheerfully make. I should add, that far from ever having had reason to complain, on the contrary, I have had only to be satisfied with the attachment and the affection of my well-beloved consort. She has adorned fifteen years of my life, the remembrance of which will ever remain engraven on my heart. She was crowned by my own hand. I wish that she should preserve the rank and title of Empress, but, above all, that she should never doubt my sentiments, and that she should ever regard me as her best and dearest friend."

\* The civil marriage was dissolved in December, and the spiritual divorce was pronounced by the officiality of Paris on the 12th of January. For this last ceremony no absolute necessity appears to have existed, as the marriage itself had never been solemnized as a religious rite.

took place at a short distance from the town in a temporary wooden building constructed for the occasion, divided into three compartments, the Austrian, the French, and a middle one, declared neutral. As soon as it was understood that the Empress had arrived at Altheim (a small town in the neighbourhood) on the morning of the 16th of March, the French escort instantly repaired to the place of meeting. The persons selected for this duty were the Queen of Naples (Caroline Buonaparte) the Duchess of Montebello, the Duchess of Bassano, the Countesses of Luçay, Montmorenci, Mortemart, and Bouillé, the Bishop of Metz, grand-almoner, the Count Beauharnais, chevalier of honour, the Prince Aldobrandini Borghese, first equerry, Counts d'Aubusson, Bearn, Angosse, and Barrol, chamberlains, Count Philip Segur, marshal of the palace, Barons Saluces and Audenard, equerries, Count Seyssel, master of the ceremony, and M. de Bausset, prefect of the palace.

The last-mentioned person, always ready and anxious to oblige and knowing the curiosity which would be felt (particularly by his fair countrywomen) to see their new and youthful sovereign before they were formally introduced to her, had bored a number of holes in the thin wooden partition that separated them from the Austrian court, through which they obtained a view of Marie-Louise without her being aware of it. She was seen standing on the throne prepared for her; her person tall and graceful, her hair flaxen, her eyes blue, expressing all the openness and innocence of her character, and her whole visage breathing health and goodness of disposition. She had on a robe of gold-tissue, adorned with rich flowers, and wore round her neck a miniature-picture of Napoleon encircled with diamonds of immense value. She was surrounded by the highest persons of her court, ranged on her right and left according to their rank, and by the officers of the Hungarian guard in

their rich and handsome uniform. The ceremony of the transfer took place as it was dictated by Napoleon himself ; and part of the document is worth transcribing as strikingly characteristic of a mind that could descend from the greatest to the smallest things or occupy itself with both at once. It should seem that the incessant exertion of his mind, instead of fatiguing, only gave a fresh stimulus to its activity, and that the diversity of objects on which he employed his attention, so far from distracting, increased the comprehensiveness and clearness of his views.

*“Arrangements for the reception of her Majesty the Empress at Braunau.*

“The barrack or wooden building having been got ready as has been enjoined, her Majesty the Empress will arrive there at noon precisely.

“The lady of honour, the ladies in waiting, and all the retinue of her Majesty will leave Braunau, so as to arrive at the pavilion at half-past eleven.

“The commissioner of the Emperor and King, the Prince of Neufchâtel, will have arrived there at the same hour.

“Her Majesty the Queen of Naples shall be invited to repair to the pavilion at half-past eleven o’clock.

“All belonging to the French escort shall enter by the French avenue, and shall be arranged in the order pointed out by the master of the ceremonies.

“The equerry of the Empress shall come to an understanding with him in order to issue the proper order.

“General Friant shall give orders for placing the sentinels outside and around the barriers encircling the pavilion ; in the Austrian division of which there should be admitted only what appertains to the Austrian service, and in the French division only what appertains to the French ; but no stranger.

“A superior officer shall be charged with the superintendence of the police, and there shall be small patroles stationed for this purpose.

“M. de Segur shall arrange with General Friant in such a manner as to have some one appointed to direct the approach of the Austrian escort by the Austrian avenue.

“The Empress on her arrival at the pavilion will alight at the door of the Austrian compartment.

“After her Majesty shall have rested a little, she shall proceed to the apartment intended for the ceremony of the transfer, followed by her Austrian retinue, and shall sit down in an arm-chair, surrounded by her ladies, the officers of her household, and having on her left the Austrian commissioner charged to transmit her.

“The master of the ceremonies of the court of Vienna, or the officer deputed to discharge his functions, shall go in search of the French commissioner and the officers and dames named for the service of the Empress, who shall be assembled in the division declared French, and placed on the French side.

“The Queen of Naples shall remain in the French division with the French retinue; she shall be seated in an arm-chair and surrounded by her household. She will continue in this apartment during the whole time of the ceremony of the transfer.

“The French commissioner and retinue will pass through the French door into the neutral compartment occupied by the Empress.

“The group shall pause after having entered the apartment.

“The French commissioner alone, accompanied by the Austrian and French masters of the ceremonies, shall advance towards the Empress, and after having made three reverences, shall address a complimentary speech to her Majesty, explaining the object of his mission.

"After her Majesty's reply, the Austrian master of the ceremonies shall point out to the French commissioner the Austrian commissioner; the two commissioners shall then salute and mutually compliment each other: the first compliment shall be paid by the Austrian commissioner.

"They will next proceed to the verification of their powers: the Austrian counsellor of state, discharging the functions of secretary, will read the powers of the Emperor of Austria to his commissioner; and the French counsellor of state, discharging the functions of secretary, will in like manner repeat those given by the Emperor of the French to his commissioner."

The rest of the instructions relating to the reception of the Empress by the Queen of Naples and her ladies in waiting, and to the arrangement of the military, were in the same spirit and dictated by the same hand, and would leave one in wonder at the union of the most gigantic combinations and petty details in the same understanding (like the minute descriptions and grand effects in Richardson's novels) but that it seems as if the mind, the more it does, the more it can do, and that as by inaction it rusts and grows torpid, so the principle of activity in it is multiplied as it is called forth, without its being possible to assign the utmost limits of the human capacity.\* Be this as it may, the ceremonial prescribed was complied with to the letter. The commissioners went through their parts with due courtesy and solemnity; the Prince of Neufchâtel introduced the Empress to the Queen of Naples, who took her by the hand and led her to her carriage, and they proceeded

\* All artificial memory is the memory of two things instead of one; and the more we know of any subject, the better we remember it, i.e. there are so many more links of association. The veracity of Napoleon's accounts of his battles is deducible from his knowledge of the circumstances. He would not say such a movement took place when he saw some obstacle staring him in the face which made it absurd or impossible. Liars have short memories and confused imaginations.

together to Braunau. Napoleon, to show a sort of romantic jealousy with regard to his imperial bride, had given instructions to her chevalier of honour, the Count Beauharnais, not even to offer her his hand in ascending or descending a flight of steps. But this refined precaution was frustrated of its effect at the very outset ; for on taking leave at the pavilion, the whole Austrian escort from the highest to the lowest person of the train approached to kiss hands. Buonaparte may be supposed to have enjoined this forbearance on his esquire with the same high-flown feeling of gallantry that makes Antony indignantly resent the idea that any one else should touch the hand of Cleopatra, “her hand *my* playfellow !”

Having arrived at Braunau, the Empress took off her German dress, and was habited in the French fashion from head to foot. She then received the oaths of fidelity from her attendants. She dined with the Queen of Naples and Madame Lazanski. After dinner she received the last farewell of the persons of her father’s court who had followed her thus far to express their attachment and good wishes ; and the next day she set out for Munich. Here she was met by the Baron St. Aignan, equerry to the Emperor, who brought her a letter from Napoleon. At Munich she was obliged to part with the Countess Lazanski, who had been her governess, and to whom she was much attached. So many mischiefs had arisen from allowing their early advisers to accompany youthful princesses into foreign countries, that the practice was given up as dangerous. From her first setting her foot on the soil of France the Empress was hailed as the Aurora of a brighter day, of a new age of gold. At Strasburg she was met by a page of the Emperor’s, who brought a letter, the choicest flowers of the season, and some pheasants of his own shooting. She here also for the first time gave an audience to a deputation of the local authorities, who were delighted with her affability. The cavalcade passed through

Nancy, Vitry, Chalons, Rheims, and were to have stopped at Soissons for the night, according to a formula fairly penned, and exactly setting down the interview for the morrow. But the impatience of Napoleon, who was grown as amorous as a boy of fifteen, disconcerted all his own fine schemes, and cut short the ceremony. The escort was ordered forward to Compiègne; and Napoleon putting on his grey great-coat and stealing out of the park-gate with the King of Naples, hastened to meet his betrothed bride. He passed through Soissons; and as the carriage in which Marie-Louise was, drew up to change horses at the village of Courcelles, he flew to the coach-door, opened it himself, and the Queen of Naples saying, "It is the Emperor," he threw himself on the Empress's neck (who was unprepared for this abrupt and romantic meeting), and the carriage was ordered on with all speed to Compiègne, where it arrived at ten the same evening. The Empress breakfasted in her chamber at noon the following day. The rejoicings and congratulations on her arrival were universal: the city of Paris made costly presents both to the Emperor and Empress; the procession at the public marriage passed from St. Cloud to the Tuileries, and through the great gallery of the Louvre, which was lined on each side with a triple row of all that was most distinguished in France, or nearly in Europe; and that no favourable augury might be wanting, Ferdinand himself is said, at a banquet at the château of Valençay, to have drank *To the health of Napoleon the Great and his august spouse Marie-Louise!\** Soon after (on the 27th of April) the Emperor and Empress set out on a tour through the northern departments, to give the good city of Paris time to breathe. Dances, garlands of flowers, triumphal arches welcomed them all the way. On one of

\* The cardinals alone absented themselves from the ceremony, and affected to throw a slur on the marriage, for which they were sent from Paris.

these last, at a small hamlet (to show how easily enthusiasm runs up into superstition) was inscribed in front, *Pater Noster*; and on the reverse side, *Ave Maria, plena gratiā!* The curate and mayor of so loyal and pious a village did not of course go empty-handed away.

On their return to Paris (1st of June) the rejoicings were renewed; and it was at this period that the dreadful accident by fire occurred at the entertainment given in celebration of the marriage by the Austrian ambassador, the Prince of Schwartzenburg. The ground-floor of the ancient *Hôtel de Montesson* which he occupied in the Rue Chausseé-d'Antin, was not large enough to hold all the company invited, so that he had a superb ball-room constructed of wood in the garden, with a gallery of the same materials leading to it. The ceilings of this gallery were covered with paper, varnished and ornamented with paintings; the floors of both structures were made of planks raised on cross-timbers to the level of the rooms of the house, and an immense chandelier was suspended from the ceiling of the ball-room. Candles were also placed all along the walls of the gallery and ball-room. A box was reserved for the imperial family in the centre of the ball-room and fronting the entrance from the gallery, and with a private door close to it for the use of the Emperor and Empress. The *fête* commenced with opera-dancing in the garden, which was seen to advantage by means of a splendid illumination; after which the company entered the ball-room, where the dancing had continued for about an hour, when a current of air agitating one of the curtains placed across the entrance of the wooden gallery, blew it against the candles, which had been fixed too near: the curtains caught fire, and in a moment the ceiling of the ball-room and the ornaments at the sides were in a blaze. Napoleon with the Empress extricated himself with ease from the danger by the door which had been left behind his

box. He made the carriages draw up, saw the Empress as far as the Place Louis XV. on her way to St. Cloud, and then returned to assist by his presence and counsels in extinguishing the flames. They had made considerable progress: soon after the chandelier suspended from the ceiling of the ball-room fell with a tremendous crash; and in the hurry and fright, the crowd pressing towards the entrance stopped up the passage, and with their collected weight the floor gave way, and numberless victims were crushed to death or enveloped in the flames which burst out on all sides. The noise and confusion in the garden was dreadful; friends seeking friends, and the different members of a family calling in agony to one another. In a short time this temple of gaiety and enchantment was no more; nothing was left but blazing fragments and a melancholy stupor, when suddenly a young woman, handsome, elegantly dressed, and covered with diamonds, rushed forward from the smoking rafters, calling out for her children. The apparition vanished as soon as it was seen. It was the Princess of Schwartzenburg, who perished thus miserably, while her young family were assembled in the garden, and out of the reach of danger. Napoleon, by his presence of mind, and the directions he issued, saved one or two lives. Among those who suffered most, but who escaped with their lives, was the Russian Prince Kourakin. Prince Schwartzenburg was more affected than any one else by his loss, from the effects of which he never recovered. Then people began to recollect with alarm a similar accident that had taken place at the marriage of Louis XVI., then Dauphin, with Marie-Antoinette; nor was Napoleon himself quite free from these superstitious apprehensions. When, some years after, Moreau was killed at the battle of Dresden, and there was a false report that it was Prince Schwartzenburg, he remarked, "Then the omen pointed at him and not at me," as if glad to shift the presage from himself.

A few days after this accident Louis Buonaparte, who wished to govern as King of Holland, while his brother insisted on his considering himself a viceroy of France, gave up his throne, and went to live as a private individual in Switzerland, and afterwards at Rome. Holland was in consequence united to the French Empire.\*

In the course of the autumn, the pregnancy of the Empress Marie-Louise, which had been for some time talked of, was announced officially to the senate. During the whole of the month of February, the Empress walked daily on the terrace in the garden of the Tuileries which borders on the Seine ; and as she passed to and fro, was greeted by thousands who wished her well. These walks continued up to the last moment of her pregnancy. At length on the evening of the 19th of March, 1811, she felt the first pains of child-birth : the whole court and all the great officers of state were instantly summoned to the Tuileries, and waited with impatience the event. The labour was a very difficult one. During the whole time Napoleon was in an apartment close by, from whence he went into the Empress's room every now and then. After she had been some hours in labour, Dubois, the *accoucheur*, came out to him while he was reclining on a sofa, with great alarm painted on his countenance, and said that "the Empress was in a state of great danger, for that there was a wrong presentation." He was asked if he had ever seen anything of the kind before. He replied that "he had, but very rarely, perhaps not one in a thousand, and that it was very distressing to him that so extraordinary a case should happen with the Empress." "Forget," said Buonaparte, "that she is Empress, and treat her as you would the wife of a little shop-keeper in the Rue St.

\* A last attempt at negotiation with England had been just made by means of some Dutch agents, and failed through the impertinent interference and double diplomacy of Fouché, who set on foot another of his own, and thus rendered both suspected.

Denis. This is the only favour I ask of you." Dubois then asked, " If it were necessary that one should be sacrificed, which he should save, the mother or the child ?" " The mother, certainly," was the answer ; " it is her right." The Emperor then accompanied Dubois to the bed-side, encouraged and tranquillised the Empress as much as he could, and held her in moments of the greatest agony. The child was apparently dead when born, but by friction and other means it was restored to life. His birth produced a delirium of joy in the nation. On the discharge of the first gun that announced the expected event, all the population of Paris, in the greatest suspense, ran into the streets, the public walks, and the parks to count the number of guns. Twenty-one guns were to have been fired for the birth of a princess, and one hundred and one for a prince. At the discharge of the twenty-second gun, the Parisians rent the skies with acclamations and expressions of unbounded delight. Most of the powers of Europe sent ambassadors extraordinary to compliment Napoleon on the occasion. The Duke of Wurtzburg represented his brother the Emperor of Austria as godfather, and the Emperor Alexander sent his minister for the home department to Paris to express his satisfaction.

Soon after the birth of young Napoleon, his father had it in contemplation to build a superb palace for him, nearly opposite the *Pont de Jena*, to be called *the palace of the King of Rome*. The government accordingly endeavoured to purchase all the houses situated upon the ground, where it was intended to be built. Upon this spot, there was a small house belonging to a poor cooper of the name of Bonvivant, which including the ground on which it stood, was not at the highest valuation worth more than a thousand francs. The owner demanded ten thousand. The matter was referred to the Emperor, who ordered that it should be purchased at that price. When the proper persons waited upon the cooper to conclude

the bargain, he said that upon reflection he could not sell it for less than thirty thousand francs. It was referred again to Napoleon, who directed that the sum should be paid to him. When they came to settle the business, the man increased his demand to forty thousand. The architect was greatly embarrassed, and did not know how to act, or in what manner he could again venture to annoy the Emperor on the subject: at the same time he knew it would be impossible to conceal the circumstance from him. He therefore addressed him again on the subject. "This fellow," said Napoleon, "trifles with us; nevertheless there is no help for it; we must pay the money." The architect returned to the cooper, who increased his price to fifty thousand francs. The Emperor was indignant when informed of it, and said, "The man is a wretch, and I will not purchase the house at all: but it shall remain where it is as a monument of my respect for the laws."\*

According to Napoleon's own account as stated in Mr. O'Meara's work, the match with Austria was the determination of the moment and not the result of any prior arrangement. "No sooner was it known," are his words, "that the interests of France had induced me to dissolve the ties of my marriage, than the greatest sovereigns of Europe intrigued for an alliance with me. As soon as the Emperor of Austria heard that a new marriage was in agitation, he sent for Count Narbonne, and expressed his surprise that his family had not been thought of. At this time an union with a Princess of Russia or of Saxony was contemplated. The cabinet of Vienna sent instructions on the subject to Prince Schwarzenberg, who was ambassador at Paris. Dispatches

\* The Bourbons on their return razed the foundation of the intended palace, and threw down what had been erected: the cooper's hovel fell to ruins, and its master, M. Bonvivant, was living not long ago at Passy, where he earned an indifferent livelihood by his trade.

were also received from the French ambassador in Russia, stating the willingness of the Emperor Alexander to offer his sister the Grand Duchess Anne. Some difficulties, however, presented themselves relative to the demand that a chapel for the Greek ritual should be established at the Tuileries. A privy council was held on the subject, and the votes of the majority were for an Austrian princess. I consequently authorised Prince Eugene to make an overture to Prince Schwartzenberg; and articles of marriage, similar to those between Louis XVI. and Marie-Antoinette, were drawn up. The Emperor Alexander was not pleased that his overtures were slighted, and thought he had been deceived, and that two negotiations had been carrying on at the same time, in which he was mistaken. It has been said," added Napoleon, "that the marriage with Marie-Louise was one of the secret articles of the treaty of Vienna, which had taken place some months before: this is entirely false. There was no thought whatever of an alliance with Austria, previous to the dispatch from Narbonne, relating to hints which had been thrown out by the Emperor Francis and by Metternich. In fact, the marriage with Marie-Louise was proposed in council, discussed, decided, and signed within twenty-four hours, which can be proved by many members of the council who are now in existence. Several were of opinion that I ought to have espoused a French woman; and the arguments in favour of this were so strong, as to incline me to balance for a moment. It was hinted, however, by the court of Austria, that declining to choose a princess out of one of the reigning houses of Europe would be a tacit declaration of an intention to overturn them, whenever the opportunity should present itself."\*

\* In confirmation of the above account, M. Savary states, that being one day at a court-circle, he was desired by the Emperor to point out any one of the ladies present who most resembled the Princess Ann Paulowna, who was at that time only sixteen years of age:

Buonaparte's ambition to make his son King of Rome and to repair and restore that famous city to its ancient magnificence was in better taste and spirit than the project he entertained about this time to bring the Pope to Paris and make the latter the capital of the Christian world. To revive faded splendour and greatness is difficult enough ; but to transfer the associations and reverence belonging to a seat of classic renown by a mere *fiat* of the will, or by the removal of what only remained to prove that the spell was gone, was impossible. It would be easier to transport the Seven Hills on which the queen of the world stood to the banks of the Seine, than to make people feel and think of Paris as they do of Rome. It was a fault in Buonaparte's mind that from the very intensity and activity of his will he seemed disposed to regard everything as matter of positive institution. But there were certain things placed beyond his reach. He could not create time ; nor, however he might establish a new era in the world, anticipate the effects of antiquity or superstitious awe a single day. What he might have made of Paris, there is no saying ; but he could not cause it to become ancient Rome. Besides, there is something in Paris that above all other places is essentially modern, ephemeral, and that refuses to blend in any shape with history or imagination. With respect to Rome itself, whatever recollections hovered round it and might naturally produce a yearning that way, it could not be again what it had been ; because, in order to be so, the world must again become what it had been in relation to it. Rome had attained its pre-eminence because the rest of the world was in a comparatively barbarous

the Empress-mother had scruples founded on stories in the English newspapers. The Emperor of Russia, when he heard of the Austrian match, exclaimed emphatically, "This condemns me to my native forests." It is not at all likely that if his marriage with an Austrian princess had been already agreed upon, Napoleon would have risked offending Alexander by entering into a correspondence with him on the same subject.

state ; and this perhaps was a fallacy that misled Buonaparte in calculating on the foundations of his own empire. France was not so far advanced in arts or arms as to be the natural mistress of the civilised world. Thus much however could have been done ; he could have made Rome a once more flourishing and noble city ; he could have drained (as he proposed) the Campagna, he could have preserved the old monuments, and raised up an Italian people as he had done an Italian army, out of the very dregs of sloth, of effeminacy, and superstition ; for these things it is in the power of man to do and to undo. All in fact that was desirable was practicable ; for glory and fame need not exist twice : the great masses of power and splendour are never lost sight of, and acquire grandeur by reflection and distance. Buonaparte, by flattering the national vanity of the Parisians, had come in too great a degree to be the dupe of it, and seemed to have got a notion in his head that the whole universe was to be translated into French. The decree for removing the Holy See to the archbishopric of Paris was probably only issued in a fit of spleen, and was never acted upon. Buonaparte intended to have left France to the young Napoleon as his successor in the empire, and to have made his second son (had he had one) King of Italy and Rome.

In the summer of the year in which the King of Rome was born (1811) the Emperor and Empress made a tour through the north of France ; and visited especially the ports of Antwerp and Cherbourg, where Buonaparte had projected and executed some of his most stupendous works. The basin at Cherbourg for the reception and shelter of a large fleet had been begun in the time of Louis XVI. but had been given up in despair. It was now brought to perfection, after immense labour and expense. While here an incidental trait is recorded of him which paints his character in a trifling matter as strongly as in the greatest. After he had inspected the barracks and the artillery,

and pointed a few of the guns, he had the bread of the garrison and the soup used by the soldiers brought to him to taste. He took a spoon, and filled it ; when the first thing he perceived was a long hair: he took it out boldly, and swallowed the soup, not wishing to hurt the pride of the soldiers around him by any remarks on their carelessness. To understand this, it must be observed that if the same thing had happened at his own table he would have been forced to rise and leave the room, from his extreme aversion to anything like a want of cleanliness. Such was his command over himself and his attention to the feelings of others! In the years 1811 and 1812 the war with Spain had gradually assumed a more serious and alarming character ; and the victories of Burgos, Badajoz, and Salamanca were gained by the allied Spanish and English armies. The Prince of Wales had been appointed Regent in the beginning of 1811, in consequence of his father's continued indisposition. Gustavus of Sweden, who had tried in vain to restore the age of chivalry in our time, had been driven from his throne ; and the crown prince who was chosen to succeed him died suddenly while reviewing his troops in the spring of 1810. Bernadotte was invited to succeed him, and accepted the offer with Buonaparte's permission, though he did not much applaud a choice which afterwards proved so injurious to him. It was about the same time that Louis Buonaparte abdicated the throne of Holland from a squeamish refinement of character which does not care what mischiefs befall, so that it has no hand in them. Early in 1811 Count Czernicheff had been sent to Paris to ascertain the exact effective force of France, as Russia was already beginning to feel sore at the treaty of Tilsit. He obtained the information he wanted, and set off on his return home, just in time to prevent his being stopped by the police. Russia declared war against France in April 1812. Buonaparte's fatal expedition to Moscow took place in consequence shortly after : but that part of the subject claims a place by itself.

## CHAPTER XLIII.

## EXPEDITION INTO RUSSIA.

Preliminary observations on the expedition into Russia ; Austria and Prussia agree to assist Napoleon ; Turkey and Sweden enter into a treaty with Russia ; Napoleon quits Paris ; meets the Austrian and Prussian sovereigns at Dresden ; Russia rejects a pacific proposal from Napoleon ; immense force concentrated on the Niemen ; address to the army ; disposition of the Russian armies ; the Russian frontier crossed ; Davoust defeats Bagration ; actions on the banks of the Luczissa ; continued retreat of the Russians.

LET a country be so situated as to be able to annoy others at pleasure, but to be itself inaccessible to attack ; let it be subject to a head who is governed entirely by his will and passions, and either deprived of or deaf to reason ; let it go to war with a neighbouring state wrongfully or for the worst of all possible causes, to overturn the independence of a nation and the liberties of mankind ; let it be defeated at first by the spirit and resentment kindled by a wanton and unprovoked attack, and by the sense of shame and irresolution occasioned by the weakness of its pretended motives and the baseness of its real ones ; let it however persevere and make a vow of lasting hatred and of war to extermination, listening only to disappointed pride and revenge, and relying on its own security ; let it join with others, influenced by similar counsels, but not exempted by their situation from suffering the consequences or paying the just and natural forfeit of disgrace, disaster, and mortification for the wrong they had meant to inflict on truth and liberty ; let it still hold out, watching or making opportunities to bully, to wheedle, to stir up the

passions or tempt the avarice of countries smarting under old wounds to engage in new wars for which they are not prepared, and of which they undergo all the punishment ; let it laugh at the flames that consume the vitals of other kingdoms, exult in the blood that is shed, and boast that it is the richer for all the money that it squanders ; let it after having exhausted itself in invectives against anarchy and licentiousness, and made a military chieftain necessary to suppress the very evils it had engendered, cry out against despotism and arbitrary sway ; let it (unsatisfied with calling to its aid all the fury of political prejudice and national hatred) proceed to blacken the character of the only person who can baffle its favourite projects, so that his name shall seem to taint the air and his existence to oppress the earth, and all this without the least foundation, by the means of a free press, and from the peculiar and almost exclusive pretensions of a whole people to morality and virtue ; let the deliberate and total disregard of truth and decency produce irritation and ill-blood ; let the repeated breach of treaties impose new and harder terms on kings who have no respect to their word, and nations who have no will of their own ; let the profligate contempt of the ordinary rules of warfare cause reprisals and give a handle to complain against injustice and foul play ; let the uselessness of all that had been done or that is possible to bring about a peace and disarm an unrelenting and unprincipled hostility lead to desperate and impracticable attempts —and the necessary consequence will be that the extreme wrong will assume the appearance of the extreme right ; nations groaning under the iron yoke of the victor, and forgetting that they were the aggressors, will only feel that they are the aggrieved party, and will endeavour to shake off their humiliation at whatever cost ; subjects will make common cause with their rulers to remove the evils which the latter have brought upon them ; in the indiscriminate con-

fusion nations will be attacked that have given no sufficient or immediate provocation, and their resistance will be the signal for a general rising; in the determination not to yield till all is lost, the war will be carried on to a distance and on a scale where success becomes more doubtful at every step, and reverses, from the prodigious extent of means employed, more disastrous and irretrievable; and thus without any other change in the objects or principles of the war than a perseverance in iniquity and an utter defiance of consequences, the original wrong aggravated a thousand-fold shall turn to the seeming right—impending ruin to assured triumph—and marches to Paris and exterminating manifestos not only gain impunity and forgiveness, but be converted into religious processions, *Tu Deums*, and solemn-breathing strains for the deliverance of mankind. So much can be done by the wilful infatuation of one country and of one man!

The expedition to Moscow in 1812 arose out of the inability or the disinclination of Alexander to keep the engagements he had entered into at Tilsit and Erfurt. Those stipulations might be hard and galling in their consequences; but they were the penalty of defeat and the price of peace at the time. He had also accepted Finland as an equivalent, and had leave to march upon Turkey unmolested, which opened a different channel for his warlike preparations, if he felt a disposition that way. It was (to be sure) ridiculous to see fifty millions of people prevented from trading with England, because it interfered with the pleasure of a single individual: a prohibition, apparently so arbitrary and so strictly enforced, might be thought to reflect on the spirit and independence of the country, and certainly bore hard upon its interests. But England would not make peace with France, while she had any means left of carrying on war; and there was no mode of compelling her to a course she abhorred (and the necessity had been

acknowledged by Alexander himself) but by excluding her commerce entirely from the Continent. Whether she was right in assuming that attitude of bold defiance and interminable war, is another question ; but she by that virtually outlawed France, and Napoleon and his allies (such as he could make or find) only followed the example she had set, in adhering in their turn to the continental system. It was, however, a hopeless case ; and it would have been better to have let go the only hold he had upon England than by continuing to grasp it (in spite of warning and every day's experience of its inefficiency and danger) to suffer himself to be dragged to the edge of a precipice. Alexander gave the first umbrage in not fulfilling the conditions of his treaties with Napoleon ; and by his want of frankness and candour, manifested no disposition to come to an explanation or good understanding. It was a sullen challenge, and Napoleon thought proper to accept it. Alexander doubtless began to feel that the other had no immediate claim to dictate a line of policy to any one with his influence and at the distance at which he was. This is true : neither would Buonaparte have had any pretext to do so, had he never come to seek him, and thus given his rival advantages and laid himself under obligations, not arising out of his natural position nor the real interests of his country. He had put it in Napoleon's power to give the law to him by making himself a party to the affairs of others : he had no consistent right therefore to cancel the obligations he had thus laid himself under by retiring upon his own resources, and saying that he was bound by none but Russian interests. He had come out of his fastnesses into the common arena, thinking to make a gallant figure and to throw Russia as a casting-weight into the scale of European policy ; he had no right to say then, " In Russia I am unassailable, I want nothing to do with your quarrels or disputes," since in that case he ought to have staid there. To say nothing of the partition of Poland and

the encroachments on Turkey, Russia had lately appropriated Finland, had thrice gone to crush France ; and yet Alexander talked of nothing but the honour of sovereigns and the desire of Russia to remain quiet. The fear that Buonaparte entertained of Russia was affected or chimerical as to practical purposes—her great strength was in the *vis inertiae* she opposed to foreign blows : his real motive was anger at not having been able to make her come into his schemes either by art or arms, and a determination to let Alexander see that what he had failed in by persuasion, he could make good by force. Still he was sensible of the immense difficulty and hazard of the undertaking ; made more careful inquiries, consulted more opinions, and hesitated longer than about any other of his enterprises. This very hesitation might have decided him against it : had there not been dishonour or danger in the alternative, he could not have hesitated. In his situation, there were only two motives that should have induced him to undertake new plans, either absolute necessity or the certainty of success. In weighing the objections to the war, Buonaparte did not and would not allow the disproportioned odds, against which he contended. Had he entered the lists as a legitimate sovereign, as a *parchment* Emperor, he might have gone forth and had a tilting-bout with Alexander, either on the Niemen or the Don, in summer or winter, and returned as he came, not much the better or worse, with a battle lost or won, with more or less fame, with so much influence or territory added or taken off ; but in his case he never fought but for his existence. *His retreat was*, in technical language, *always cut off*. He should therefore have defied them to catch him at a disadvantage. He did not like to contemplate the lodged hatred and rankling hostility of which he was and must necessarily be the mark. His elevation prevented him from seeing the depth below : yet he trod upon a precipice where any false step was ruinous.

The very extent of his power showed the precarious and ungrateful tenure by which he held it ; for he could only have attained it by a triumph over the last resources and efforts of his enemies. No ordinary objects of ambition or interest would have brought them to that pass : it was a deadly quarrel which made them risk their last stake before they would give in. But the principle remained unaltered ; and however coiled up in its dusky folds or severed into unsightly fragments, would reunite and spring into action again with the first opportunity of revenge. That Buonaparte did not dwell on this view of the subject, was but natural : that he ever acted on the contrary one, was inexcusable.

There was another general consideration which Napoleon overlooked : all that related to the statistics of the question he was perfectly master of, population, productions, number of towns, rivers, bridges, extent of country, &c. but it was trying an unknown ground, a new species of warfare. He knew what resistance civilization could make : did he know equally well what resistance barbarism could make ? It appears, by the result, not : and yet the burning of Moscow was in this undetermined order of events, to which his failure was properly owing. Notwithstanding the grasp and manly strength of his mind, the air of Paris had perhaps made him lay rather too much stress on artificial advantages ; but there is an extreme resource in the very dearth of resources, and a despotic power over mind and matter acquired by the very ignorance, poverty, and subjection of a people.\* Buonaparte himself says that "he had no more right to anticipate the burning of Moscow than he could be required to foretell an earthquake ;" and that is true, supposing that capital to have stood anywhere but where it did ; but there was something in the idea of its gilded domes rising out of barren boundless wildernesses that placed

\* Civilization gives hostages : barbarism has none.

it out of the routine of ordinary calculation, and might have prevented its being counted upon as substantial winter-quarters. These are the only points in which I think Buonaparte erred, in not weighing the consequences if he failed, and not considering the possibility that he might do so from the untrdden path he was about to enter. As to ordinary political or military calculations, I should suppose that he was completely justified ; that is, he was prepared to overcome all the obstacles of a kind to be foreseen ; and no one else (any more than himself) suspected his defeat till after it happened. It was a thunder-clap to friend and foe alike. Those who at present assert that the enterprise from the first contained the visible seeds of destruction within itself, and that Buonaparte had lost half his army by mismanagement and obstinacy before he had even reached the Russian frontier, will make few converts either to their judgment or veracity.

Buonaparte had taken care to secure the co-operation of Austria and Prussia, through whose territory he was to pass. Prussia was to send thirty thousand men into the field ; and Schwartzenberg was to have the command of the Austrian contingent in Galicia. He had hoped also for the assistance of Turkey on his right, and of Sweden on his left ; in both which points he failed, though they were of less consequence. He had cultivated with considerable success and assiduity the friendship of the Sultan Selim, and there was a sort of political free-masonry in the correspondence between them : but after Selim's death he had calculated little on the favourable disposition of his successor, while the battle of Friedland had led him to expect greater advantages from seconding the policy of the Emperor Alexander. A coolness between the two courts had ensued, till Buonaparte having come to a rupture with Alexander, sent to Mahmoud to offer him provinces, troops, and money, if he would immediately march to his aid against Russia with

seventy thousand men. This abrupt and crude offer of friendship was declined ; instead of it, the Turk concluded a treaty of offensive and defensive alliance with Russia on the 12th of May, 1812, being alarmed at the representations of Buonaparte's increasing power, which it was said would soon threaten the shores of the Bosphorus. This disappointment was less severely felt than the defection of Bernadotte, who also signed a similar treaty with Alexander about the same time. This man was the creature of Buonaparte, and he turned against his benefactor ; he was a Frenchman, and he turned against his country ; he was chosen king of Sweden, and he leagued with Russia, its most dangerous rival and late despoiler ; and all this, to gratify a private pique and the natural perverseness of his disposition. Bernadotte was one of those men who had been raised into public notice, "drawn from the dregs of a democracy." There are two extreme vices in political character ; servility, which may be described as an abject submission to power whether right or wrong ; and faction, which has its root in the envy and hatred of all power, with the same disregard of truth and justice.\* This is the low-minded and self-destructive side of republicanism. It abhors all superiority whatever, not because it is unmerited, but the more for its being merited ; it is jealous of all distinction, but doubly so of that which is founded on great ability and public service. It repays obligations with ingratitude, for the act of conferring them implies a painful sense of pre-eminence ; and even generosity in forgiving a number of offences, as denoting excellence and virtue, is in its eyes a crime. While the loyal are heaping their idols with incense, these pretended patriots are decrying and pulling in pieces all who can take the lead or do any good on their own side of the question. They cannot bear the success of any thing, not even of their own

\* Independence or true patriotism lies between.

cause ; and they would sooner see it perish by the hands of men, whom while they hate they can despise, than prevail under the guidance of those whose triumph they ought to share, and whom they hate because they are compelled to admire them. This is one great reason of the failure of the popular cause, that it is clogged with so much of that love of freedom which is merely the envy of fortune, and that its most ardent partizans being actuated by the spirit of contradiction and a moody, captious, discontented humour, are dissatisfied with liberty itself as soon as it is attained, and fall out with their comrades and leaders, even before they have got rid of their enemies. They are the proud-flesh and ill-humours of the state, whether in a monarchy or a republic. They screw up their professions of patriotism and independence to a romantic height in order to serve as a foil and be a stumbling-block in the way of practical good ; and if that will not serve the turn, run into the opposite extreme and make a traffic of their baseness and fickleness, rather than be baulked in their career of selfish vanity and low rancour. It was a scion of this set of men, who by their headstrong perversity and mutual antipathies tore the Revolution in pieces, that in the person of an upstart king gave it its death's-blow. Bernadotte had been one of the society of the *Manége* (a remnant of the most violent agitators among the Jacobins)—he had opposed Buonaparte's accession to power on pure republican principles ; he then tried to sow discord in the army ; endeavoured to lose the battle of Auerstadt to dim the lustre of the French arms ; pretended he had won the battle of Wagram (claiming the merit he could not gainsay) ; he was then chosen crown-prince of Sweden, the electors thinking it would please Buonaparte ; he received a sum of money from him to enable him to go ; was full of acknowledgments till he had passed the frontier, when he wrote a letter to disclaim all future obligation ; insisted on the neutrality of Sweden

to favour the English monopoly of the sea ; sided with Russia to maintain the balance of power and the independence of nations, Norway being the bait and France the sacrifice ; and asserted the republicanism of the *Manège* by agreeing to restore the Bourbons, merely because they had never come into personal collision with him. And all this he was empowered to do with insolence and with impunity, because he had married a woman to whom Buonaparte had been attached and wished to gratify by making his godson Oscar a prince. In such cases, his forbearance and security were wonderful ; and with all his fine-spun policy, his weakness when private friendship or family-connexions were concerned, was that of a girl. Buonaparte among his other ways and means had one resource open to him in the ardent and inextinguishable longing of the Poles for liberty (not unmixed with revenge) which he might have opposed with effect to the stubborn attachment of the Russians to their native soil and tyrannical masters. But of this he did not choose to avail himself, but stopt up its sluices, as he was not fond of giving a loose to those elements and movements of power, of which he could not calculate the extent or control the direction. If he had ever intended seriously to encourage the zeal and patriotism of the Poles, he ought not to have sent the Abbé de Pradt as his ambassador to Warsaw, merely to amuse them with words. In making war on serfs, he should have raised up a nation of free men ; and instead of considering the liberation of Poland as the consequence, have made it the instrument and the pledge of his success in Russia. But regrets are vain on this subject : were it to do over again, he would follow the same course. Even on his return from Elba, he would not lend himself to the popular ferment in his favour.

On the 9th of May, 1812, Napoleon quitted Paris to join the army. A scarcity with which France was threatened had kept him back for some weeks ; as he

would not stir from the capital till by incredible exertions and judicious precautions the danger had been averted. From Paris to Dresden his progress was a continued triumph. He was followed by the Empress and a numerous court. The eastern departments through which he had to pass set no bounds to the demonstrations of their enthusiasm. This side of France, like all frontier countries, was always noted for its patriotism. This is not from what they gain but from what they have suffered by war. Buonaparte had thus far kept invasion at arm's-length. The distant provinces might grumble at their ease. But as long as he was successful, French patriotism was not local; for French vanity is not confined to the eastern departments. In Germany, the feelings were no doubt different: still the inhabitants crowded to line the long route pursued by the Emperor, gazing at him who had so often vanquished them, as a preternatural being. He had intimated a wish that the Emperor of Austria, several kings, and a great number of princes should meet him at Dresden. This wish was eagerly obeyed. The king of Prussia came uninvited, and though Buonaparte was by no means anxious to see him. The adulation was excessive and universal. He was the only object of attention; and every one else gave way before him. Seated in the palace of one of the capitals of Germany, surrounded by the descendants of her ancient kings, showing his imperial spouse, the daughter of the Caesars, at his side, he seemed more like a monarch receiving his vassals than a soldier of fortune who had obtruded himself into the presence of kings. The population of whole cities had deserted their dwellings, and spent days and nights in gazing on the gates and windows of his palace or waiting in expectation of seeing him pass. Yet it was not his crown, his rank, or the luxury and splendour in which he lived that excited this intense curiosity and interest; it was the man himself; they wanted to

stamp on their minds his figure and lineaments : they wanted to have it to say, that they had seen Napoleon.

Besides gratifying himself (which did not however go for much) the French Emperor had perhaps two objects in view in this display, to dazzle Alexander and conciliate the good-will of the sovereigns ; in each of which it failed. Alexander only turned more averse from a pomp of which he was already jealous, and from a parade of friendship and alliance which he knew to be forced and hollow. As to the monarchs, it wounded their pride and ripped up instead of healing old wounds and recollections. They did not like to see themselves appear as ciphers before one who owed all to himself ; or to be elbowed in his antechambers by his marshals and officers. Poets (ever flatterers of power) paid him divine honours at the theatres. Even their own subjects seemed ready to kneel down before him. They had then come to Dresden merely to heighten the splendour of Napoleon's triumph over them, for it was over them that he triumphed ; every acclamation he received was a reproach to them ; his grandeur was their abasement, his victories were their defeats. As to Napoleon himself, there must have been a lurking feeling of something theatrical and burlesque in these state ceremonies and repeated rehearsals of etiquette ; and as he did not enjoy them himself, he could not make others enjoy them. He liked either serious business or simple and familiar intercourse : he had no taste for artificial restraint and formal *nothings*. He however submitted to necessity, and did the honours with what grace he could. The Empress unwittingly had her share in exciting the heart-burnings, that were not kept a secret on this occasion. She eclipsed her stepmother (the Empress of Austria) in finery and jewels ; and if Buonaparte endeavoured to check her, she resisted or wept. The Empress-mother, who was of the house of Este, had retained

in her mind a deadly resentment of her family having been dispossessed of the duchy of Modena by General Buonaparte ; and let it escape her in unguarded starts and ebullitions of spleen. It was in this glass that Napoleon should have studied the figure he made in the eyes of princes and courtiers. Women, who are not implicated in political transactions nor perplexed with the pedantry of reasoning, are the true mirrors of all that relates to floating opinion or instinctive prejudice. This princess died in 1816 ; but she lived to taste the full gratification of her revenge ; and to see the time when mines of jewels would not have extorted a smile or a sigh from the consort of an emperor and a king, who was hurled from that elevation because he was his own Rodolph of Hapsburg, and not descended from the tyrants of some petty state in Italy !

In the meantime, and while the columns of his armies were marching through the territories of his allies to the places of rendezvous, Napoleon directed Lauriston, the French ambassador at Petersburg, to apply for a definitive proposition to be sent to Wilna, and made General Narbonne repair to Alexander's head-quarters, to assure that prince of the pacific disposition of France ; and even (it is said) to invite him to come to Dresden. Lauriston was not listened to ; and Narbonne on his return stated, that " he had found the Russians neither depressed nor boasting ; that the result of all the replies of the Emperor was that they preferred war to a disgraceful peace ; that they would take good care not to risk a battle with an adversary so formidable ; and finally, that they were determined to make every sacrifice to protract the war and drive back the invader." Buonaparte received this reply at Dresden, where he remained till the 29th of May, when he proceeded to Posen, and from thence to Thorn, avoiding Warsaw, where the war did not require his presence, and where he must have plunged into politics again. At Thorn he severely upbraided

and even menaced his brother Jerome, on account of the complaints of the inhabitants against the exactions and insolence of the Westphalians ; though in consequence of the bustle and rapid movement of the troops, the natural effect of his interference was too often lost. Provisions, it is true, were supplied in abundance and with regularity all the way to the Niemen ; but the chief difficulty arose in respect to the more bulky articles of fodder, and the cavalry soldiers were sometimes obliged to mow the green corn, or to strip the roofs of cottages of their thatch as food for their horses. Beyond the Niemen the evil increased. Many of the provision-waggons broke down, and the carriages were too heavy for the sandy roads they had to pass. Provisions were therefore procured on the march ; horses, cattle, and food of every kind were seized upon ; and in the hurry and confusion of forced marches to overtake and overcome the Russians by a *coup de main*, there was no time to try or even discover the guilty. Napoleon, however, did all he could to remedy the mischief and preserve discipline. Among the accusations brought against the troops, he at one time distinguished with indignation the names of certain individuals of high rank ; he had the complaints against them inserted in the orders of the day ; and soon after seeing one of them at the head of his regiment, he angrily said, " You disgrace yourself ; you give an example of pillage ; either forbear or go back to your father : I can dispense with your services."

From Thorn Napoleon had descended the Vistula. Graudentz belonged to Prussia : he avoided passing through it, though he sent an artillery officer under some trivial pretence to inspect it. At Marienburg he met Davoust, who had a violent quarrel in his presence with Berthier. Though Davoust had the best of the argument at the time, it turned to his detriment afterwards, as well as to that of the service, Buonaparte being prejudiced against him by the representations of those about him, and neither making use of his

advice or assistance with the confidence they merited. His zeal was construed into officiousness, and his methodical and systematic preparations for carrying on the grand expedition into a desire to take the conduct of the war into his own hands. From Dantzic the Emperor proceeded on the 12th of June to Königsberg. Here terminated the inspection of his immense magazines, and of the second resting-point or grand station of his line of operations. Here were collected stores of provisions, enormous as the enterprise for which they were designed. No detail had been neglected. The active and ardent mind of Napoleon was wholly intent on that most important and difficult part of the expedition. The day was swallowed up in dictating instructions on the subject; and at night he rose to repeat them. One general alone received in a single journey six dispatches from him, all expressive of his anxious vigilance. In one of these he says, "The result of all my movements will be the concentration of four hundred thousand men upon one point: nothing can then be expected from the country; and consequently, we must carry everything with us."

From Königsberg to Gumbinnen, Napoleon passed in review several of his armies, talking to the men with gaiety, frankness, and a soldier-like bluntness. As his custom was, he walked leisurely along the ranks. He knew the wars in which every regiment had been engaged with him. He stopped for a few moments before some of the oldest soldiers, and to one he recalled the battle of the Pyramids, to another that of Marengo, Austerlitz, Jena, or Friedland by a single word, accompanied with the most familiar address. The veterans thus recognised by their Emperor, felt elated before their junior comrades, who looked up to them with admiration and envy. Napoleon continued his round. He did not neglect the young: he showed an interest in all that concerned them, and was well acquainted with their smallest

wants. He questioned them : Did their captains properly attend to them ? Were they regularly paid ? Was there any article they wanted ? He should like to see their knapsacks. He halted at length before the centre of the regiment. There he informed himself of the places that were vacant, and inquired aloud who were the most worthy to fill them. He called before him those who were pointed out by their companions, and interrogated them as to their length of service ; their campaigns ; their wounds ; their feats in arms. He then created them officers ; and they were accordingly introduced as such in his presence, and in the manner which he prescribed. These individual attentions to the soldiers absolutely charmed them. They remarked to each other that their great Emperor, who decided on the fate of nations in a mass, descended in respect to themselves into the most minute particulars : that they were his old, his genuine family ! It was thus that he attached them to war, to glory, and to himself.

The army now proceeded from the Vistula towards the Niemen. That river, from Grodno as far as Kowno, flows parallel with the Vistula. The river Pregel runs from one to the other : it was covered with boats and provisions. Two hundred thousand men arrived there from four different points. They here found bread and a quantity of forage ; and these supplies, at first ascending the river with them, were afterwards forwarded to Wilna by land. The French were now close upon the Russian frontier. From the right to the left, or from south to north, the army was drawn up before the Niemen as follows : first, upon the extreme right and advancing out of Gallicia upon Drogicsen was Prince Schwartzenberg, with thirty-four thousand Austrians : on his left coming from Warsaw and moving on Bialystock and Grodno, Jerome Buonaparte at the head of sixty-nine thousand Westphalians, Saxons, and Poles; close to them the Viceroy of Italy, who had just completed his junction

at Marienpol and Pilony, with seventy-nine thousand Bavarians, Italians and French : then the Emperor with two hundred thousand men, commanded by Murat, Davoust, and the Dukes of Dantzic, Istria, Reggio, and Elchingen. They came from Thorn, Marienwerder, and Elbing, on the Vistula ; and on the 23rd of June were collected at Nogarisky, a league beyond Kowno. Finally, before Tilsit, at the mouth of the Niemen, Macdonald and thirty-two thousand five hundred Prussians, Bavarians, and Poles, formed the extreme left of the grand army.

All was now ready. From the borders of the Guadalquivir and the Calabrian sea to the banks of the Vistula, above four hundred thousand men, six bridge-equipments, one for siege, some thousands of provision waggons, innumerable herds of oxen, thirteen hundred and sixty-two pieces of cannon, and thousands of artillery and hospital waggons, were now brought together and stationed within a few paces of the frontier river of Russia. The provision-waggons alone experienced some delay. The army, of which not more than two-thirds were French, were in the best disposition and spirits. The old looked back with pride and confidence on the past ; the young with hope and curiosity to the future. All talked of what they had done, or of what they meant to do. The Poles who were mixed up with the army infused their patriotic feelings and their hatred of the Russians into it. Those who could, wished to be near Napoleon, where the chief action was ; and where what was done under his eye was immediately rewarded by his hand. The generals who had been accustomed to luxury and splendour, but who were compelled by him to live up to their incomes, were still for the most part dependent on him for fortune ; nor, however they might prefer ease, could they bear to be left behind in the race of glory. The great and general sensation, moreover, excited by the expedition was no slight attraction : its success appeared certain ;

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they were going to carry their achievements and fame to the very confines of the civilized world. This one effort more, and all would be over. It was a last opportunity ; so that those who did not avail themselves of it would bitterly repent, and listen with anguish to the glorious recitals that would be made of it by others. In short, the vastness of the enterprise ; the agitation of all Europe co-operating to accomplish it or waiting the event ; the equipment and array of four hundred thousand infantry and eighty thousand cavalry ; the clash of arms, the trampling of horses, and the notes of martial music, the incessant warlike reports and military orders kindled even the veterans to enthusiasm. The most insensible could not escape its animating influence ; the contagion was universal. Napoleon was satisfied with the spirit manifested by the army, and addressed them as follows :—“ Soldiers ! the second Polish war is begun. The first was terminated at Friedland and Tilsit. At Tilsit Russia swore to an eternal alliance with France and war against England. She has violated her oath ; she refuses to give an explanation of her singular conduct till the French eagles shall have repassed the Rhine, and consequently left our allies at her discretion. Russia is driven onwards by fatality ; her destinies are about to be accomplished. Does she believe we have degenerated ! Should we be no longer the soldiers of Austerlitz ? She has placed us between disgrace and war ; the choice cannot be for an instant doubtful ! Let us then march forward, cross the Niemen, and carry the war into her territories. The second Polish war will be glorious to the French arms, like the first ; but the peace which we shall conclude will carry its own guarantees with it, and will put an end to the fatal influence which for the last fifty years Russia has had on the affairs of Europe.” This address was appropriate enough in the circumstances ; it was only belied by the event. Alexander also addressed a proclamation to his troops.

The plea which he made use of would have been unanswerable, if he and Napoleon had met now for the first time; or if Russia never having passed and never intending to pass beyond her own limits, her soil *alone* became by this circumstance sacred and inviolable.

Volhynia, Lithuania, Courland, and Livonia were all favourable to the French, and expected their arrival with eagerness. Alexander kept these countries in awe with an army of three hundred thousand men. Alexander, and under him his minister of war, Barclay de Tolly, directed the whole of these forces. the centre under Barclay extended from Kowno as far as Grodno: to the south of Grodno, Bagration had sixty-five thousand men near Wolkowisk; and Wittgenstein twenty-six thousand to the north of Kowno, at Rossiana and Kedani. Besides this, Tormasof had an army of fifty thousand men in Volhynia to keep Schwartzenberg in check, till Tchitchakoff should come up with the army of Moldavia, released by the treaty with the Turks: two other corps were formed at Bobruisk and Riga: the reserves were at Wilna and Swentziani, and there was a vast entrenched camp raised before Drissa on a bend of the Duna. Napoleon thought that this position of the Russians behind the Niemen was neither good for attack nor defence; that it was extended over too large a space; that the marshes of the Berezina behind Bagration cut off his retreat; and that by advancing in full force upon Kowno and Wilna, he could drive back and separate Alexander from his two wings, and by a sudden turn to the right, surround and take the whole left of their army prisoners. While the Emperor was preparing to carry this movement into effect, Schwartzenberg at first defeated Tormasof; but after the arrival of the second Russian army from Bucharest, did nothing more, acting supinely, and as there is reason to believe, with bad faith, during the rest of the campaign; while Macdonald, in the north, main-

tained the war with vigour and judgment, though without any decisive results, and was at last obliged to retreat not by the enemy, but by the Emperor's orders.

Between these two extreme points, the grand army marched towards the Niemen, in three separate masses. The King of Westphalia with eighty thousand men took the direction of Grodno; the Viceroy with seventy-five thousand, that of Pilony between Grodno and Kowno; the Emperor with two hundred thousand men, that of Nogarisky, a farm situated beyond Kowno. On the 23rd of June, before day, the imperial columns approached the Niemen, through the borders of the great Prussian forest of Pilwisky, and the hilly ground that lines the river prevented them from seeing it. Napoleon mounted on horseback and went to reconnoitre the situation to find a passage over. When he had nearly reached the river, his horse fell, and threw him on the sand. "That," said some one present, "is a bad omen: a Roman would go back!" Having examined the ground, he ordered three bridges to be thrown across the river the same evening near the village of Poniemen; and went and passed the rest of the day in his tent, motionless and oppressed with the heat, which at this time was excessive. The first that crossed the river were some sappers in a skiff. They landed on the Russian side, without meeting any impediment or seeing any one but a single Cossack, who after the exchange of a few questions, withdrew into a wood, into which three of the French soldiers discharged their pieces after him. No other sound announced the new war and the invasion of a vast empire. Three hundred *voltigeurs* immediately crossed the river to protect the establishment of the bridges. Then all the French columns passed to the river-side, in perfect silence and under cover of the darkness. All fires were forbidden; and they lay down to sleep with their arms in their hands. The green corn, wet with the

dew, served as a bed for the men and as food for their horses. During the night, they repeated passages of the Emperor's proclamation which had just been read. As the day dawned, they looked towards the country they were about to enter, but saw only a dry and sandy plain and dark forests. About three hundred paces from the river, on a rising ground, was the Emperor's tent; around it the tops and sides of the hills and the intervening valleys were completely covered with men and horses. As soon as the sun had risen upon these moveable masses glittering in arms, the signal was given; and they all set forward in three columns towards the bridges. Two divisions of the advanced-guard, while contending for the precedence in passing over, nearly came to blows, and were separated with difficulty. Napoleon took his stand near one of the bridges, surveying the men with looks of encouragement as they passed. But at length he grew impatient, and darted off at full gallop into the country as if eager to find an enemy. He returned and proceeded with the guard to Kowno. A violent storm soon after came on, and a distressing accident happened in the course of the day. The Cossacks having broken down the bridge over the Vilia, where Oudinot was to pass, Buonaparte ordered a squadron of Poles of the guard to throw themselves into it and swim it. This they did at first without difficulty; but coming into the middle of the stream, they were disunited and carried away by its violence. Some of them struggled to save themselves in vain; but in the very moment of sinking, they turned their last looks towards Napoleon, and cried, "Long live the Emperor!" The army looked on with admiration and terror. Napoleon, suppressing his emotion, gave every necessary order, so as to save the greater number. A bridge was shortly after thrown across, over which Oudinot and the second corps marched towards Kedani. It took the rest of the army three entire days to pass the Niemen.

From Kowno Napoleon arrived in two days at the defiles defending the plain of Wilna. He hoped that Alexander would have waited for him here, but information was brought that the city was evacuated. He moved forward to it, not well pleased, complaining that the generals of the advanced-guard had suffered the Russian army to escape. The same day, a number of hussars of the 8th having pushed on too rapidly were cut to pieces by the Russian guard that had been concealed in a wood. The enemy was in full retreat to Drissa. Murat was made to follow the track of Alexander, while Ney was sent to support Oudinot, who attacked and drove back Wittgenstein on the left as far as Wilkomir. The Emperor returned to Wilna, which he had hastily hurried through, where his unfolded maps, military reports, and a crowd of officers awaited his arrival. He threw himself on a bed, as if fatigued, but in reality to meditate; and soon after starting up, dictated all the requisite orders. He received accounts from Warsaw and the Austrian army. The address at the opening of the diet displeased him. "It is French, it ought to have been Polish." He was also assured that of the whole Austrian army he could depend only on their leader: this he thought sufficient.

The French were welcomed as deliverers in Lithuania. Everywhere the same sentiments were observable; in the interior of houses, at the windows, and in the public places. The inhabitants stopped to congratulate and embrace one another in the streets and on the roads: the aged reappeared, clothed in the ancient costume, which recalled ideas of glory and independence. They wept for joy at sight of the national banners which had just been unfurled, and which were followed by an immense multitude, rending the air with acclamations. The diet of Warsaw had shown great spirit; it had formed itself into a general confederation, declared the kingdom of Poland to be reestablished, required all Poles in the

Russian service to return home, appointed a representative of itself in a general council, and presented an address to Napoleon at Wilna, in which he was called upon to pronounce the sentence, "*Let the kingdom of Poland be*," and it would be! Napoleon, it must be granted, did not do much to fan this rising flame into a conflagration, but a good deal to damp it. He gave them, however, his good word and good wishes, pleaded his engagements to Austria, recommended unanimity, said they must do all for themselves; and accordingly they did nothing either for themselves or him. They had looked upon him as the arbiter of the world, and they found him talking like a diplomatist. His situation was embarrassing enough; but when he chose he knew how to cut the Gordian knot of policy with his sword. He could irritate a people by cheating them of a government to which they were stupidly attached. Why not make the *amende honorable* by relieving a people of a yoke to which they were naturally averse? He had made war upon Russia chiefly to erect Poland into a barrier against that power. How then could he pretend that the liberation of Poland might be a bar to his making peace with Alexander? If he had come all this way to fight him as a piece of gladiatorialship, the object was not worth the cost and trouble. But if Napoleon did not second the enthusiasm of the Poles at this time, he was too just and too proud to reproach them with the want of it afterwards.

The exactions and excesses of the army did not tend to increase the cordiality of the natives. In Prussia the Emperor had ordered the troops to take with them provisions to last twenty days—that is, till they reached Wilna. Victory would effect the rest. But the flight of the enemy postponed that victory. Yet having overtaken and disunited the Russians, he did not like to forego this advantage. Dantzig alone contained grain enough to supply the whole army. The supplies were intended to be forwarded by the Vilia,

which the drying up of that river prevented. The convoys at length arrived by land at Wilna, but not till after the army had left it. It was the centre column that endured most hardships: they followed in the track which the Russians had already laid waste. Not only the inhabitants, but the army therefore suffered severely on its march. On its being represented to Napoleon that many soldiers, even of the guard, had died of hunger, he exclaimed, "It was impossible: soldiers well-officered could never die of hunger!" He was then told that the men had not died from hunger, but intoxication. "We must bear," he said, "the loss of a few horses and a few equipments, and even the destruction of a few habitations; it is the unfavourable aspect of war: misfortune must have its share in everything; my riches and benefits will repair any losses; one grand result will compensate for all; I only want one victory: if I have enough left to obtain that, it is everything."

In this state of things, Balachoff (a Russian flag of truce) presented himself, bringing a verbal message from Alexander, that "there was yet time to treat from one bank of the Niemen to the other;" but as he was charged with no specific proposals, and as his character excited some suspicion, being the minister of police, he was dismissed without any satisfactory result. On this occasion Buonaparte is said not to have been sparing of his sarcasms. He observed that "Alexander was a mere parade general," and accused Caulaincourt (it is supposed with a view of making him a more welcome messenger to Alexander at some future time) of being "a Russian in the French camp." But a number of things are put into Buonaparte's mouth in the current reports, to which he perhaps would not have pleaded guilty. There is even in the best French accounts so much *ex-post-facto* criticism mixed up with the history, such a desire to make up for the failure of the enterprise by a premature sagacity in foreseeing it, such an air of

nervous apprehension thrown over its very outset, such a disposition to find or to insinuate faults in the execution of the plan rather than in the plan itself, to throw the blame on the individual as a salvo for the national vanity, that we cannot be too much on our guard in determining what to believe or what to reject, whenever this bias may be supposed to come into play.

Meantime Murat was attempting to obtain that victory so much desired : he commanded the cavalry of the advanced-guard ; and having come up with the enemy on the road to Swentziani, drove them before him towards Druia. Every morning the Russian rear-guard seemed to have escaped him ; every evening, he discovered it again, but too late for an attack. On the 15th of July, the Duna had been reached at different points by Murat, Monbrun, Sebastiani, and Nansouty, by Oudinot and Ney, and by three divisions of the first corps which had been placed under the command of Count Lobau. Oudinot made a feeble attempt upon Dunabourg : Wittgenstein, retreating from it towards Drissa, surprised and overthrew a division of French cavalry at Druia, taking most of them prisoners. This *coup-de-main* gave Napoleon hopes that Barclay was assuming the offensive ; and he suspended his march upon Witepsk in order to be ready for battle. Thus far his plan had been completely successful. In breaking the enemy's line by a violent attack on a single part, he had repulsed and driven the largest mass of his forces under Barclay upon the Duna, while Bagration, against whom he had directed no attack till five days later, was still left behind upon the Niemen. Already Davoust, at Osmiana to the south of Wilna, had observed some of his scouts, who were anxiously seeking for an outlet to the north. Measures were taken accordingly. Davoust on the 8th had stationed himself in advance of the Russian general towards Minsk and Vigumen, while the King of Westphalia received

orders to press upon his rear and compel him to involve himself in the defiles or long narrow causeways over the marshes of the Berezina, which constituted his only retreat. He accordingly presented himself at the outlets, first at Lida and then at Minsk, but found Davoust there before him. On receiving this intelligence and finding Bagration with forty thousand Russians cut off from his communication with Alexander, and enclosed by two rivers and two armies, Napoleon exclaimed, "I have them!" In fact, the Russian general was completely entangled, had Jerome Buonaparte behaved as he ought to have done. But while Davoust was waiting for him to drive the Russians into the snare prepared for them, that young prince, who had been put under Davoust's orders, disdaining to serve under a subject, had flung up his command and retired in disgust into Westphalia, without (as it is said) even forwarding the instructions he had received. Thus perhaps by entrusting power in the hands of family-connexions was all reversed that had been done or attempted by taking it out of them and giving it to *the most worthy!* Bagration not being closely pressed by the Westphalians, turned farther south, passed the Berezina at Bobruisk and reached the Boristhenes at Mohilef. Here the two generals again stumbled upon each other by chance. Bagration had at this time thirty-five thousand men; Davoust only twelve thousand with him. The latter, however, determined to intercept his progress; and placing himself on a narrow height between two woods with a ravine before it, gave battle to the Russian commander, and defeated him with great loss. The Russians excused themselves by saying they believed Napoleon had been there in person; his fame thus multiplying his influence all round him, for Barclay fancied he was before him at Drissa, while Bagration thought he was at Mohilef. The latter retreating once more, passed the Boris-

thenes at Novoi-Biohof, where he at length united with Barclay beyond Smolensk.

Napoleon, disappointed at the failure of his plan, attributed it to his not being able to be present everywhere. The circle of his operations was so greatly enlarged, that while compelled to remain in the centre, he was wanted everywhere at the circumference. He had been twenty days at Wilna, waiting the result of his different combinations. He now, therefore, prepared to set forward, having first appointed Maret (Duke of Bassano) to the government of Lithuania and to be the medium of his communication with the army and France, and published a sort of manifesto against Russia in the following terms :—“Behold, then, this same empire of Russia at a distance so formidable ! It is a desert, of which the scattered hordes are not sufficient for its protection ; they will be conquered by that very extent, which ought to be their safeguard. They are barbarians. They scarcely even have arms. They have no recruits in readiness. It would require more time to collect them than we should take to go to Moscow. It is true that since the passage of the Niemen, the unsheltered and unsheltering waste has been either inundated or parched up ; but such calamities are less an obstacle to the rapidity of our invasion than an impediment to the Russians in their flight. They are conquered without battles by their own mere weakness, by the remembrance of our victories, and by the pangs of remorse which urge them to restore that Lithuania, which they obtained neither by peace nor war, but by perfidy alone.” The army being united, and a battle requiring him in the field, Napoleon left Wilna on the 16th of July, stopped the next day at Swentziani during the heat of the day, and on the 18th arrived at Klubokoe. He there took up his abode in a monastery, from which the small town immediately under it appeared to him more like a collection of the

huts of savages than the habitations of civilised Europeans.

An address from the Russians to the French had just been circulated in the army. It contained a good deal of abuse, accompanied with an invitation to desertion. The Emperor was irritated on reading it, and dictated a reply, which however he immediately tore to pieces ; he dictated a second, which underwent the same fate ; and at last a third, with which he was satisfied. This was the paper which was published at the time in the journals under the signature of a *French Grenadier*. While he was engaged about this answer, he was apprised that on the 18th Barclay de Tolly had abandoned his camp at Drissa and was marching towards Witepsk. He immediately ordered all his corps upon Beszenkowicsi ; he ordered Murat and Ney to that place from the neighbourhood of Polotsk, where they then were, and where Oudinot was left. He himself proceeded from Klubokoe, where he had been surrounded by his guard, the army of Italy, and the division detached from Davoust to Kamen. Thus far the greater part of the army had gone on marching in astonishment at not finding any enemies. They appeared in many instances less like an army of warriors than like men pursuing a comfortless and unprofitable journey. But if war and the enemy should thus continue to fly before them like the horizon, how far should they advance in the pursuit ? At length on the 25th a cannonading was heard : and the army as well as their leader hoped for a battle, a victory, and peace. The sound came from the quarter of Beszenkowicsi. Prince Eugene had just had an encounter with Doctorof, who commanded the rear-guard of Barclay. He had cleared the passage of the Duna and burnt the bridge, which the viceroy had repaired. Napoleon hastened to the spot, and passed over the bridge to ascertain what progress the Russian army had made, and whether he could overtake it before it reached Witepsk. But being soon convinced that

Barclay had outstripped him, he returned to Beszenkowicsi, where his armies now arrived at the same moment by the north and west roads. His orders of march had been so clearly laid down and were executed with such perfect precision, that all these corps, after leaving the Niemen at different periods and by different routes, notwithstanding every species of impediment, after a month's absence and after traversing a hundred leagues from the time of their departure, were all reassembled at Beszenkowicsi, which they reached on the same day and at the same hour. In consequence, the greatest confusion now prevailed in that place: but before midnight, all these masses which had appeared inextricably intermingled gradually cleared away: the vast collection of troops flowed off towards Ostrowno, or was absorbed in Beszenkowicsi; and the most frightful tumult was succeeded by the profoundest calm.

Everything announced a battle on the ensuing day. Napoleon, not having been able to gain Witepsk before the Russians, was determined to expel them from it; after entering it by the right bank of the Duna, they had passed through the city, and presented themselves in front to defend the long defiles by which it is covered. Murat had marched on with his cavalry the day before (the 26th of July) towards Ostrowno. At the distance of two leagues from that village, the 8th hussars were advancing in column on a wide road, bordered by a double row of large birch-trees. They thought they had been preceded by two other regiments of their division who were to pass along the fields, but whom they had in fact left behind; and seeing only a part of three regiments of cavalry of the Russian guard at the top of a hill before them, they marched on with the utmost confidence, not suspecting much resistance. Presently an officer whom they sent forward to reconnoitre was cut down, and six pieces of cannon began to play upon them. They lost no time in deliberating, but darted between the

trees and ran forward to extinguish the fire. They seized the guns; and in the impetuosity of their attack, repulsed the centre regiment of cavalry which was stationed on the high road. They now perceived the two other regiments; attacked and overthrew that on the right; and before the one on the left could effect its retreat, fell upon it and were the third time vanquishers.

Murat inflated by this exploit pushed into the woods of Ostrowno in search of an enemy. He soon found one. The ground hastily won by the 8th hussars was now fiercely contested with himself; and his advance-column composed of the divisions Bruyeres and St. Germain and the 8th regiment of infantry had to defend themselves against superior numbers under the Russian General Ostermann; but after an obstinate engagement, the division Delzons coming up to their assistance, the victory was with the King, who led on the attack now and hazarded his life with the same dauntless bravery as when he had been a private in the ranks. That same evening, the Viceroy rejoined Murat, and the following day saw the Russians in a new position. Pahlin and Konownitzin had united with Ostermann. While the two French princes were consulting how they should commence the attack with their right wing, they heard an immense clamour on their left, and saw their own men repulsed by the Russians who were issuing with the utmost intrepidity and in large masses, out of the woods whence those deafening war-cries had first been heard. A battalion of Croats and the 84th regiment in vain attempted to stem the torrent; the ranks were broken; the ground in front was covered with the slain, that behind with the wounded or those who were glad of the excuse for leading them off; the artillerymen, not seeing themselves relieved, were retiring with their cannon, and the confusion was becoming general and irretrievable. At this moment Murat in a state of violent agitation placed himself at the head of a regiment of Polish

lancers, and rushed headlong on the enemy. Murat's object had been at first merely to excite and animate them to the combat, but the lances of the Poles were in their rests, and closely filed behind him ; they occupied the whole width of the road, they pushed him on with the utmost speed of their horses, and he was absolutely compelled to charge with the regiment before which he had placed himself merely to harangue it. General Anthouard running forward to his cannons, and General Girardin rallying the 10th regiment, seconded by General Piré, they retrieved the fortune of the day, and the Russians fell back upon their forests. One division alone still occupied a thick wood in advance, which was carried by General Belliard. At this point of time the Emperor came up. The viceroy and Murat hastened to inform him of what had happened, and to consult him on the propriety of proceeding. Napoleon instantly ascended the highest point of ground in the neighbourhood; and having reconnoitred the forest which lay before them, and which had presented so formidable an aspect to the two victorious princes, gave orders for advancing; and that same evening, Witepsk from her double hill might see the French riflemen debouching into the plain by which it is surrounded. Here everything made it necessary to halt. Napoleon slept in his tent on a spot of rising ground to the left of the road and behind the village of Kukowiaci.

On the 27th the Emperor appeared at the advanced posts before sunrise. Its earliest rays discovered the Russian army encamped on an elevated plain, which commanded all the avenues of Witepsk. The river Luczissa, flowing in a channel of extraordinary depth, marked the foot of this position. In front of it, ten thousand cavalry and a body of infantry showed an apparent intention of defending its approaches; the infantry was in the centre on the high road; the left on woody eminences; and the whole of the cavalry on the right, in double line, supported by the Duna.

Buonaparte was on a small hill, from whence he could survey both armies. The front of the Russians was no longer directly opposed to the French, but inclined with a bend in the river, so that it was necessary for the latter to effect a change in their position in order to face them. The first who advanced were two hundred Parisian *voltigeurs*, belonging to the 9th regiment: the 16th of horse-chasseurs came next, with some pieces of artillery: the Russians merely looked on. The King of Naples, intoxicated with the view of such an assemblage of spectators, could not restrain himself, but precipitated the chasseurs of the 16th on the whole of the Russian cavalry. They were driven back, and cut almost to pieces. Murat, stung to madness at perceiving the result, threw himself sword in hand into the very midst of the rout and confusion, with the sixty officers and cavalry that he had about him. The mere audacity of the attack disconcerted the Russian lancers, who halted. The remains of the 16th rallied and were joined by the 53rd regiment. The successful charge of the Russian lancers had brought them near the foot of the hill, where Napoleon was giving directions. Some of the chasseurs of the French guard dismounted according to custom to form a circle round him; and by discharging their carbines drove back the lancers, who on their return fell in with the two hundred Parisian *voltigeurs* who had been left alone between the two armies. Everybody gave them up for lost. But though alone they themselves had no feeling of despair. Their commander led them, desperately fighting all the way, to a spot of ground interspersed with thickets and deep gaps, which bordered on the Duna. Here they formed in an instant with that quick sense, which habit and danger together inspired. The Russian lancers embarrassed by the brambles and brushwood and impeded by the many refts and openings in the ground, could not act to advantage; and while they were endeavouring to surmount these

obstacles, they were struck by the French bullets, and fell wounded to the earth; their own and their horses' bodies encumbering the field still more. At length they were repulsed; the flight of their enemies, the applauding shouts of the French army, the insignia of the legion of honour which the Emperor on the instant dispatched to the bravest, the words he used on the occasion, which were afterwards read by all Europe, everything served to complete the satisfaction of the men at the danger they had escaped and the glory they had just achieved. After another sharp action the Russians withdrew behind the Luczissa, and united on the opposite bank, presenting a force of eighty thousand men.

Their assured aspect and strong position in front of a capital made Napoleon believe they meant to give battle here; and this was in fact their intention. He put an end to the attack, though it was only eleven in the forenoon, to prepare for the next day. He breakfasted on a hillock among the riflemen; while surveying the ground, a ball hit one of the persons in his suite. On taking leave of Murat, he said, "Tomorrow at five you will see the sun of Austerlitz!" Murat had no faith in the prediction, to which indeed the event did not answer, though the Russian general, believing Bagration near Orcha, had resolved to give battle, and his determination was changed solely in consequence of his receiving in the course of the night intelligence of the retreat of Bagration towards Smolensk. Still perhaps Buonaparte was to blame in leaving any opening for such a change of purpose, and there was a time when he would have taken opportunity by the forelock. There is no doubt that an accumulation of adventitious honours and distinctions, like a weight of golden armour, clogs the mind and presses on the nerve of action; and they are therefore fittest for those who have nothing to do either to gain or keep them. Even fame itself in a manner suspends the aspirations after excellence,

and it is therefore an advantage rather than a subject of complaint that it is generally posthumous ! On the 28th, at daybreak, Murat sent to inform the Emperor that he was going in pursuit of the Russians, who were no longer within sight. Napoleon would not at first credit the report ; but their empty camp soon convinced him of its truth. Everything in this camp bore testimony to the commander's science in war ; nothing had been left behind, nor was there the least trace to indicate the route they had taken ; and the capture of a Russian soldier who was found asleep in a thicket, was the only trophy of a day which was expected to have been so decisive and brilliant. The army entered Witepsk and found it as deserted as the Russian quarters. No one was to be seen in it but a few Jews and Jesuits. They could give no information. The French followed in pursuit for six leagues, through a deep and burning sand. At last night put an end to their progress at Aghaponovchtchina. The soldiers, parching with thirst, could get only muddy water to quench it ; and while they were busy in procuring it, Napoleon held a council, the result of which was that it was useless to pursue the Russians any farther at present, and that it was advisable to halt where they were, on the confines of Old Russia. As soon as the Emperor had formed this resolution, he returned to Witepsk with his guards. On entering his head-quarters in that city on the 28th, he took off his sword, and laying it down on the maps which covered his table ; "Here," said he, "I halt. I want to reconnoitre, to rally, to rest my army, and to organise Poland. The campaign of 1812 is over ; that of 1813 will do the rest!"

## CHAPTER XLIV.

## THE SAME SUBJECT CONTINUED.

Battle of Smolensk ; battle of Valentina ; unopposed advance of the French ; Barclay de Tolly superseded by Kutusof.

THOSE who expected Napoleon to stop short in the middle of an enterprise like the present, or who seriously advised him to fall back to a place of greater safety, could have known very little of his character. He was not one of that description of warriors to whom the trite satire could apply :—

“ The King of France with twenty thousand men,  
Marched up the hill, and then marched down again.”

He had however those about him who gathered up the “sweepings” of his mind, and who expected him to be afterwards bound by them, if they fell in with their own timid resolutions or an unforeseen event. Everything unfavourable to the expedition is sedulously recalled and stamped with a prophetic character, and as if it had met the approbation of all that was sound and judicious in the army, though in the endless agitation of the question and suggestion of every possible view of the subject, it was probably only as one remark in a thousand, that on which the least stress was laid at the time, and though in all likelihood not a single individual in the whole camp ever dreamt of the catastrophe that followed, but which in these retrospective pages is traced out in its fullest extent and with every mark of verisimilitude upon the face of it. Buonaparte might in a fit of weariness and disgust have thrown out some such

expressions as those mentioned at the end of the last chapter, or traced an hypothetical line of defensive operations from Riga in the north to Bobruisk in the south, and laughed at Murat, who resented the retreat of the Russians as if it were the breach of an appointment, by saying "It is a three years' war; 1813 will see us at Moscow, 1814 at Petersburg"—but it is very unlikely he ever seriously entertained any such ideas. The agitation and restlessness he is said to have manifested at this period are easily accounted for from the heat of the weather, the lassitude he experienced, and a variety of projects for circumventing and detaining a foe that constantly eluded his grasp, without supposing that he balanced between action and inaction, or had determined upon taking up his winter-quarters in the height of summer. It became him to do something. If he could not find men to fight with, he must go in search of places, of which the conquest would give an *eclat* to his arms, and put a natural period to his march. Accordingly, we find that now more than ever, his imagination was possessed with the idea of Moscow captive: this was the term of all his fears, the object of all his hopes. In the possession of that city he was to find everything, or a compensation for it in romantic achievement and endless renown. It was absurd to suppose that he would wait eight months for an object, which he felt to be within his reach in twenty days. If there had ever been an appearance of indecision, it very soon vanished. Already full of the plan which was to crown him with success, he ran to his maps. He here saw nothing but Smolensk and Moscow—the great Moscow, the holy city—names which he repeated with satisfaction, and which seemed to increase his eagerness. At the sight of them he appeared inflamed by the genius of war. His voice became harsh, his glance fiery, and his whole air stern and fierce. His attendants retired from his presence, through fear as well as respect; but at length his mind was fixed,

his determination taken, his march traced out: immediately the tempest was calmed, and having given consistency and utterance to his conceptions, his features resumed their wonted character of placidity and cheerfulness.

He did all he could to gain over the officers to his opinion, resolving doubts, answering objections, and entering into the question with that frankness and simplicity which secured by manners the fidelity and attachment of many whom neither his misfortunes, their country, nor the cause of mankind could bind. He redoubled his attentions to the soldiers: if he met any parties of wounded, he stopped them to inquire into their situation and history; he often sent wine from his table to the sentinel nearest him; and reviewed the troops which were in his neighbourhood every day. Encouraged in this manner, the formidable names of Smolensk and of Moscow did not alarm them. In ordinary times and to ordinary habits, an untried soil, new tribes of people, a distance which magnified everything, would have appeared insuperable obstacles; but to such men, these were precisely the strongest attractions. They delighted only in hazardous situations, which became the more exciting in proportion as their peril and their novelty gave them an air of singularity and of adventure. Ambition was now let loose from all restraint: every circumstance tended to inspire a passion for renown; they had plunged into a boundless career. How indeed was it possible to estimate the ascendancy gained and the impulse given by a powerful conqueror, who had said to his soldiers after the victory of Austerlitz, "Name your children after me; I give you leave; and if one among them shall prove worthy of us, I will bequeath him my property and declare him my successor."

The union of the two wings of the Russian army near Smolensk and a severe repulse received by Sebastiani at Inkowo, together with the news of the

peace of Bucharest, hastened the decision of Napoleon. The march of Barclay upon Rudnia and other circumstances convinced him that the Russian forces were gathering to a head and meditated an attack upon him. He therefore determined to strike the first blow. He wrote letters to the Prince of Eckmuhl and his other lieutenants to follow him with all speed to Smolensk. He then separated himself from Oudinot, leaving St. Cyr to reinforce him; and removing his line of operation from Witepsk to Minsk, suddenly threw himself southward with a hundred and eighty-five thousand men to the left of the Dnieper, on the left flank, and in the rear of the enemy, who were thinking of surprising him. In this manner he proposed to outmarch the Russian general and reach Smolensk before him: if he succeeded, he would have cut off the Russian army not merely from Moscow, but from the centre and the south of Russia; and have accomplished against Barclay and Bagration united what he had vainly attempted at Witepsk against Barclay alone. This was one of those grand resolves, which ably executed change the face of war and of empire; the result in this case was not answerable.

Buonaparte left Witepsk on the 13th of August, after halting there a fortnight. He was accompanied by his guard, the army of Italy, and three divisions of Davoust's. From Orcha (to the south of Witepsk), as far as Liadi, the French proceeded in a straight column along the left bank of the Dnieper. In this moving mass, the first corps, which had been trained by Davoust, was distinguished by the order and completeness which prevailed through its several divisions; and it was held up as a model to the rest of the army. The division of Gudin lost its way in swampy woods, owing to an ill-written order, and did not join till twenty-four hours after. The Emperor traversed the mountainous and woody country lying between the Duna and the Boristhenes in a single day, and crossed the latter river at Rassasna. Its distance

from their native country, its historical celebrity, the antiquity of its name, excited the imaginations of the French, who at last perceived only a narrow stream lined with brambles and brushwood. The Emperor slept in his tent in advance of Rassasna. On the following day the army marched together, ready to fall promptly into order of battle, with the Emperor on horseback in the midst of them. The advanced guard drove before it two *pulks* of Cossacks, who only wanted to destroy the bridges and some stacks of forage. As far as Liadi, the villages bore rather a Jewish than a Polish aspect. The Lithuanians sometimes fled at the approach of the army: the Jews always remained, indifferent to ill-usage and bent on gain. They were of great service to the French both from their dexterity in business and their knowledge of German. Beyond Liadi, Old Russia commenced, and the Jews were seen no more; the general quarrel which mankind wage with that people being enhanced by their aversion to images, for which the Muscovites entertain a reverence approaching to idolatry.

On the 15th of August, at three o'clock, the army were in sight of Krasnoe, which a Russian regiment seemed disposed to defend, but it was defeated by Marshal Ney. On entering the town, six thousand Russian infantry were observed beyond it in two columns, with several squadrons covering their retreat. This was the corps of Neweroskoi. The ground was well adapted for cavalry, and Murat took possession of it; but the bridges having been broken down he had some difficulty in getting at the enemy. Neweroskoi united his columns and formed them into a complete square of such thickness that Murat's cavalry was unable to penetrate or throw it into disorder: when closely pressed, they faced about, awaited the onset with firmness, and discharged their muskets; then profiting by the disorder they had created, they continued their retreat. At one time, this column was marching on the left of the high road through some

standing corn, when suddenly its progress was impeded by a row of strong palisades, and the Wurtembergers were ordered to rush upon them and make them lay down their arms. But they stood their ground, repulsed the Wurtemberg corps, and (having made an opening in the palisades) pursued their way. Neweroskoi hastened to attain a defile which Grouchy had orders to reach before him ; but that general had only six hundred horse with him. The 8th chasseurs were also too weak to intercept so powerful a column, which was the only Russian corps between Smolensk and the French ; and had it been taken, that capital would have been left without defence. Neweroskoi, however, effected his retreat like a lion, leaving behind him one thousand two hundred killed on the field of battle, a thousand prisoners, and eight pieces of cannon. It so happened that this action took place on the Emperor's birthday. Murat and Ney, on delivering in the report of their success, ordered a salute to be fired from a hundred pieces of artillery. The Emperor, somewhat dismayed, observed that in Russia it was necessary to be economical of French powder. But he was told that it was Russian powder that had been taken the night before ; and this explanation seemed to satisfy him. Neweroskoi hastened to shut himself up in Smolensk, leaving some Cossacks in his rear to burn the forage.

In the meantime, Barclay and Bagration stationed towards Inkowo between the Dnieper and Lake Kasplia, hesitated about attacking the French army, whom they believed to be still in their front. Twice they had resolved upon it, and twice drew back. A misunderstanding existed between the two generals ; Barclay, a German, cool, scientific, systematic, wishing to protract the defensive war ; Bagration, an old Russian of the Suwarrow school, brave, impetuous, and eager for battle. The former had no one but Alexander on his side : the army and the other generals as well as Bagration looked upon the advance of the French

on the Russian soil as little less than sacrilege. But when they heard of the situation of Neweroskoi, there was no longer a question of forcing the French lines; all ran to arms and hastened to the rescue of Smolensk. The deluded inhabitants were returning from their temples where they had been to give God thanks for the success of their troops, when they beheld them bleeding and conquered flying before the victorious French. Murat and Ney had already commenced an attack on the city. Ney had indeed attempted to carry the citadel by a *coup de main*, in which he lost two or three hundred men and was himself slightly wounded. His ardour having cooled, he withdrew to an eminence on the river's bank, where he was examining the city and the surrounding country, when on the other side of the Dnieper he thought he could perceive considerable masses of troops in motion: he hastened to inform the Emperor of the circumstance and to conduct him to the spot. Napoleon having arrived there, distinguished in the midst of clouds of dust long dark columns interspersed with the glittering of innumerable arms. These masses were advancing with such rapidity that they seemed to run. It was in fact Barclay and Bagration at the head of a hundred and twenty thousand men. At this sight, Napoleon clapped his hands in a transport of joy, and exclaimed, "At last I have them!" But once more he was deceived. He immediately passed along the line of his own troops, and assigned to each commander his station, leaving a large plain unoccupied in front between himself and the Dnieper. This he offered to the enemy for a field of battle. They did not choose to accept it; and the next morning, while various opinions were entertained on the subject, were seen in full retreat towards Elnia on the opposite bank of the Dnieper. Napoleon could neither stop nor overtake them. He had nothing now to do but to secure Smolensk. The attack was carried on

with various success during the day. Here a cannon ball cut down an entire row of twenty-two men belonging to a battalion that had presented itself in flank before the Russian batteries ; there stationed on a number of little hills, the army applauded as in a theatre by the clapping of hands the struggles and the success of their comrades. Ney was to attack the citadel ; Davoust and Lobau the suburbs ; Poniatowski was to descend the river, destroy the bridges, and cut off the retreat of the garrison. The sharp sounds of the discharge of musketry from the walls continued all the day, and annoyed Napoleon, who wished to draw off the troops.

Night now came on : Napoleon withdrew to his tent, and Count Lobau, having obtained possession of the ditch, had ordered some shells to be thrown into the city to dislodge the enemy. Almost immediately were seen rising thick and black columns of smoke, with occasional gleams of light, and then sparks and burning flakes ; at length, pyramids of flame ascended from every part. These distinct and distant fires soon became united in one vast conflagration, which rose in whirling and destructive grandeur, hung over nearly the whole of Smolensk, and consumed it amidst ominous and awful crashes. This disaster, which Count Lobau very naturally imputed to himself (though it was the work of the Russians) threw him into great consternation. The Emperor, seated in front of his tent, viewed the terrific spectacle in silence. Neither the cause nor the result could be yet ascertained ; and the night was passed under arms. About three in the morning, a subaltern officer belonging to Davoust had ventured to the foot of the wall and scaled it, without giving the least alarm. Emboldened by the silence which reigned around him, he made his way into the city ; when suddenly hearing a number of voices, speaking with the Sclavonian accent, the Frenchman gave himself up for lost. But at this instant the level rays of the sun discovered in those

whom he first imagined to be enemies, the Poles of Poniatowski. They had been the first to penetrate into the city, which Barclay had just abandoned to the flames. Buonaparte the next day entered Smolensk, walking over its smoking ruins amidst heaps of dead, and sat down on some matting at the door of a cottage (while the bullets from the citadel, still in possession of the Russians, were whizzing round his head) to declaim for an hour on the cowardice of Barclay, the fine field of battle he had offered him, and the speedy dissolution of the Russian army from such base and dispiriting conduct, not being as yet in the secret of the new Scythian tactics of defending a country by burning its capitals! While heated with this discourse, a messenger came up with the news that Regnier and Schwartzenberg had beaten back Tomasof, who had made an attempt on Warsaw. "See," said he, "the wretches, they even suffer themselves to be beaten by Austrians;" and glancing round a quick and inquisitive eye, added, "I hope that none but Frenchmen hear me." About this time Rapp and Lauriston arrived at head-quarters, the one from France, the other from Petersburg; they brought the Emperor important information, but made no change in his determinations. Although the multiplied disasters and fugitive nature of the war were with some a reason for stopping short or turning back, they were with Napoleon an additional motive for advancing forward and bringing it to a speedy and decisive issue. To lose no time, he confided the advanced-guard to Murat and Ney; and placed Davoust under the orders of the King of Naples.

The Russians still defended the suburb on the right bank of the Dnieper. The French employed the 18th of August and the ensuing night in reconstructing the bridges. On the 19th, before day, Ney crossed the river by the light of the burning suburb. He and his men at first ascended slowly up the steep acclivity

before them, not knowing whether a large Russian force might not be waiting at the top to rush down upon them ; but they found only a band of Cossacks who disappeared at their approach. The two roads here diverge to Petersburg and Moscow ; and it was discovered with some difficulty that the Russian infantry had taken the one to Moscow. Ney might soon have got up with them ; but as that road follows the course of the Dnieper, he was obliged to cross the streams running into it. Each of these had excavated a channel or deep bed, on the opposite side of which the enemy successively established themselves, and whence it was necessary to dislodge them. The first, which was that of Stubna, did not detain him long ; but the hill of Valoutina, at the foot of which flows the Kolowdnia, was very severely contested. The stubborn resistance experienced on this spot has been attributed by some to an ancient tradition, which represented it as ground consecrated by victory. But what was ascribed to superstition, was owing to accident. Barclay not liking to take the direct road to Moscow, along the right bank of the Dnieper, which exposed him to the French fire from the other side or would have betrayed his retreat in the night by the rolling of the carriage-wheels, had gone round by a circuitous route which joins the main road near Valoutina, and where Ney arrived almost at the same time as the Russians. He had only to pass the height in order to block up the defile into which they had entered with all their artillery and baggage. A furious combat ensued. Thirty thousand men were successively engaged in it on either side : the obstinacy and carnage were equal, and night put an end to it, during which the Russians made their escape. Junot with the Westphalians had at one time got in their rear ; but at the moment of attack, his heart failed him, and he nearly lost his marshal's staff by it. Buonaparte, who was at Smolensk buried in business and dispatches, and who thought

that the report of cannon was merely owing to some affair of advanced posts, would hardly believe there had been a battle, till the account of the misfortune of General Goudin, an excellent officer, (who soon after died of the wounds he had received), overwhelmed him with chagrin. It is supposed that had he been on the spot to give directions, the Russian army might have been completely disabled. Such is the consequence of undertaking more than human capacity can effect!

The next day, at dawn, he appeared on the field of Valoutina. The soldiers of Ney, and those of the division Goudin (bereaved of their leader) were ranged round the dead bodies of their companions and of the Russians. The battalions of Goudin appeared reduced to mere platoons, but they seemed to feel a pride in the reduction of their numbers. The Emperor could not proceed in front of them without stepping or trampling upon the bodies of the slain and scattered bayonets absolutely wrenched and twisted by the violence of the conflict. But over these horrors he threw a drapery of glory. His gratitude transformed the field of battle into a field of triumph. He felt that the time was come in which his soldiers required the support both of praises and rewards. Accordingly, never were his looks more impressive and affectionate. He declared that this battle was the most brilliant exploit in their military history. In his rewards he was magnificent. The 12th, 21st, and 127th of the line, and the 7th of the light troops received eighty-seven decorations and promotions. These were the regiments of Goudin. Hitherto the 127th had marched without an eagle, because it had not, according to the established rule, conquered one on the field of battle. The Emperor delivered one to it with his own hands. He also rewarded and distinguished the corps of Ney. The favours were valuable in themselves and for the mode in which they were conferred. He was surrounded

by every regiment in turn as by a family of his own. These cordial manners, which had the effect of making the privates the companions in arms of the master of Europe—forms which brought back the long-regretted usages of the republic—delighted and transported them. He was a monarch, but he was the monarch of the Revolution; and they were devotedly attached to a sovereign who had elevated himself by his own merits, and who elevated others in proportion to their. In him there was everything to stimulate zeal and effort, nothing to excite offence or imply reproach.

Never was there a field of battle better employed to stir and exalt the feelings; but when out of the observation of the soldiers, his reflections took a different tone. On his return to Smolensk, every object tended to oppress and deject him. This city was one vast hospital, and the groans of anguish which issued from it, prevailed over the acclamations of triumph which had been just heard on the field of Valoutina. At Wilna and Witepk there had been a want of hospitals, but this was not the case at Smolensk. Fifteen large brick buildings saved from the flames had been set apart for this purpose; and there was plenty of wine, brandy, and medicines. There was only a want of dressings. At the end of the second night, the surgeons who were indefatigable had used up all the linen for bandages, or for stanching the wounds; and it was necessary to substitute the paper found in the city archives. One hospital containing a hundred wounded had been forgotten for three days, and was discovered by Rapp in the most distressing state: Napoleon immediately ordered his own stock of wine and many pecuniary gratuities to be bestowed on these unfortunate men, whose sufferings had only kept them alive. There was another consideration in addition to the inevitable accidents and evils of war, which now gave the Emperor a good deal of uneasiness. The burning of Smolensk he could no longer believe to be merely casual, or even

the result of a sudden fit of desperation. It was the effect of cool determination. The Russians had employed the utmost caution and arrangement in this work of destruction, and then (as he learnt from a Greek priest) laid it on the French, whom they represented as bands of incendiaries or legions of demons headed by Antichrist. The nobles and their slaves fled from their approach like a pestilence. The natives even refused to touch the utensils which the French soldiers had employed. One great fear of the Russians was that their slaves would rise up and throw off their bondage ; and it was therefore an object to prevent their having any communication with the French. They made use of the most improbable and disgusting fables to excite their terror and hatred, and of their ignorance and degradation, to perpetuate that ignorance and degradation. It was their dread that the doctrines of the Revolution might loosen their grasp on the wretched serfs who compose the population of the country that first made them send their barbarous hordes against the French territory, the consequences of which now came back to themselves, to their infinite horror and surprise, in the shape of an invasion which might produce the same effects. Buonaparte should have availed himself of the offers that were made him to detach the serf from the proprietor and the soil. But this was his weak side. He did not understand extreme remedies ; and he was fonder of power than of liberty !

The intelligence which now reached him from every side roused and kindled his ardour. His lieutenants seemed to have performed more than himself. Accounts were just received that St. Cyr, having taken the command from Oudinot who was wounded, and obtained an advantage over Wittgenstein, which would have been more decisive, had not a French brigade, stationed to support a battery, but seized with a sudden panic, fled across the mouths of the cannon so as to prevent their discharge, and to enable

the Russian cavalry to get possession of them. In this action two Bavarian generals were killed, of the names of Deroy and Liben. They were of the same age, had served in the same wars, had advanced by the same steps, and met the same death: one grave received them both. On hearing of this victory, the Emperor dispatched the bâton of marshal of the empire to General St. Cyr, and placed a number of crosses at his disposal.

Barclay had retreated as far as Dorogobouje without offering resistance; but a little beyond that town on the morning of the 23rd of August, a slight wood which Murat wanted to reconnoitre was vigorously disputed with him; and having pierced through it, he saw the whole Russian army (Barclay being just then joined by Bagration) drawn up in order of battle. He immediately sent word to the Emperor to inform him of it. Davoust also, who did not approve of the dispositions which Murat had made, wrote to him to hasten forward if he did not wish Murat to engage without him. At this intelligence, which he received in the night between the 24th and 25th of August, Napoleon started from his state of inaction with transport. To a disposition so enterprising and determined suspense was torture. He pressed on with his guard, and proceeded twelve leagues without stopping; but on the evening of the day before, the enemy had disappeared. Their retreat was attributed by the French to a movement made by Montbrun to their left; by themselves to a false position taken up by Barclay, which Bagration having immediately discovered, did not even abstain from imputations of treachery. Discord and impatience were at their height in the Russian camp, and they only waited for the arrival of Kutusof to supersede Barclay. The French Emperor on his side was no longer in a state of fluctuation; he pressed forward without apprehending any formidable consequences from the defection of the Swedes and Turks; and neglecting the hostile armies of Essen at

Riga, of Wittgenstein before Polotsk, of Hoertel before Bobruisk, and of Tchitchakof in Volhynia. He knew that wherever he was, there was the centre of the war; and he thought that every obstacle, both of arms and policy, would vanish at the first shock of the thunderbolt which he was about to launch. And yet his column of attack, which when he entered Witepsk amounted to one hundred and eighty-five thousand men, was not now more than one hundred and fifty-seven thousand: part he had left to occupy Witepsk, Orcha, Mohilef, and Smolensk: the rest of those that were missing had been killed or wounded, or were straggling in his rear. But a hundred and fifty-seven thousand men he deemed sufficient to destroy the Russian army by a complete victory, and to gain possession of Moscow.

The Emperor had advanced so rapidly to Dorogobouje that he was obliged to wait there for his army and let Murat go in pursuit of the Russians. He found that place in the same state as Smolensk, that is, in ashes; particularly the trading quarter, where the people had something to lose, and who forming a sort of middle class, a commencement or *nucleus* for a "third estate," might be accessible to the promises of liberty. The army now moved on in three columns abreast; the Emperor, Murat, Davoust, and Ney in the middle, on the great road to Moscow; Poniatowski on the right, and the army of Italy on the left. The principal column, which followed the track of the Russians, fared the worst; but orders had been given to the troops to take provisions with them for several days. Each regiment was accompanied by a number of little Polish horses, carts for the conveyance of the baggage, and a drove of oxen. Each soldier had in his knapsack four biscuits of a pound each, and ten pounds of flour; and the army had with them a number of little portable ovens. The soldiers were becoming accustomed to this wandering life, and learnt to make the most of the scanty means afforded

them. From Slawkowo, a few leagues in advance of Dorogobouje, Napoleon on the 27th of August sent orders to Marshal Victor, then on the Niemen, to repair to Smolensk. It was also from the same headquarters that he published the details of his review at Valoutina, in which were inserted the names even of the private soldiers who had there distinguished themselves. He added that "at Smolensk the conduct of the Poles had astonished the Russians, who had been accustomed to despise them." This had the effect of redoubling the hatred and efforts of the Poles against them. In the course of the march, he took a delight in dating from the middle of Old Russia a multitude of decrees which would find their way into the smallest hamlet in France. Murat had pushed the enemy beyond the Osma, a narrow river with high banks, like the greater number of rivers in that country. The Russian rear-guard had taken up a position on the opposite bank ; but Murat had gone round by a ford, and placed himself between the enemy and the river at the imminent risk of being precipitated into it, which nothing but his desperate courage could have prevented. He only lost a great number of lives to no purpose. At the moment of the chief danger, a battery of the Prince of Eckmuhl refused to fire. This incident produced a violent altercation the next day between Murat and Davoust in the presence of the Emperor at Semlewo. It had nearly ended in a challenge.

On the 28th of the month, the army traversed the vast plains of the government of Wiazma. They passed hastily over open fields, several regiments marching abreast. The high road was given up to the train of artillery and to the hospital-waggons. The Emperor appeared in every part on horseback. Murat's letters and his approach to Wiazma still gave him hopes of a battle. He was engaged in calculating as he rode forward how many thousand cannon balls would be required to destroy the enemy's army.

Napoleon had appropriated a certain station for the baggage, and had published an order for burning all carriages that should be found among the troops, as they might impede and seriously endanger the operations of the army. A carriage of General Narbonne, his aide-de-camp, being found in this situation, was burnt on the spot without suffering anything to be taken out. A letter from Berthier to Barclay, dated from Ribky, and relating to some indifferent matters, concluded with these words : "The Emperor commands me to entreat you to present his compliments to the Emperor Alexander, and to say to him that neither the vicissitudes of war nor any other circumstance can impair the friendship which he feels for him." On the same day, the 28th of August, the advanced-guard drove the Russians before them into Wiazma. The troops, parched with thirst, could here procure only a little muddy water, of which the Emperor himself was glad to drink. At night the enemy destroyed the bridges of the Wiazma ; and after pillaging the town set fire to it. It was here first ascertained beyond a doubt, by the especial orders of the Emperor, that the Russians and not his own soldiers were the incendiaries. A sutler whom he found pillaging was ordered to be shot. But those about him stationed the man a short time after where the Emperor was expected to pass, with a woman and several children kneeling by his side, who were to represent his wife and family ; and the man was immediately forgiven. Such was his well-known easiness of disposition.

He was still on horseback when he saw Belliard riding up with an account of a new disagreement between Murat and Davoust, and that Davoust had refused to let his divisions act under Murat's orders. In consequence Buonaparte sent Berthier to place the division Compans, which gave rise to the dispute, under the immediate command of the king. Davoust shut himself up in his obstinacy and in his tent ; Murat

gave vent to his vexation at the indignity offered him in a torrent of complaints and even of tears. While the advanced-guard were pursuing the Russians as far as Gjatz, exchanging only a few shots with them, Napoleon heard at Wiazma that the Russians were celebrating *Te Deum* at Petersburg for the victories of Witepsk and Smolensk. The Emperor was astonished at this account. “*Te Deums!*” he exclaimed, “they dare then to lie not only to man but to God!” In this retreat of the Russians, though they burned the towns the villages were spared, which supplied the French with forage, grain, ovens, and shelter. This preference was attributed by some to the hatred of the Cossacks to towns as implying a greater advance in civilization. On the 1st of September, at noon, Murat was separated from Gjatz only by a coppice of pines. Gjatz is divided in two by a river, the trading part being on the side nearest Asia; and the French took possession of one half, while the Russians were burning the other. The latter had disappeared behind the flames, and the foremost of the light troops were in pursuit, when one of the inhabitants came out and ran towards them, exclaiming that he was a Frenchman. He was conducted to Davoust, who interrogated him. He said, that an entire change had taken place in the Russian counsels; that Kutusof had succeeded Barclay; that a battle was to be the consequence; and that they had retreated to Borodino, not to avoid the enemy, but to take up a strong position, to root themselves there, and either conquer or perish.

An officer that arrived as a flag of truce about the same time confirmed this intelligence by his sinister looks and answers. Being asked by one of the French generals what they should meet with between Wiazma and Moscow, he sternly replied, “Pultowa.” He expressed his surprise at the utter absence of precaution in the French camp. Some Cossacks in their

eagerness to burn the bridge over the Gjatz, had been left behind. Napoleon had two of them called to him, and rode into the town with his interpreter and one of these barbarians (with their uncouth costume and wild physiognomy) on each side of him. Their answers corresponded with the information that had just been received. Barclay having thus carried into effect, in spite of clamour and increasing opposition, the plan of retreat which he had boasted of in 1807 as the only one to save Russia, was superseded by Kutusof, a general of the old school, with Tartar features and character, fierce and supple, a favourite with his countrymen from his resemblance to them, and possessed of more reputation than skill, though not without a certain tact in availing himself of circumstances. Barclay continued to serve under his new chief for the rest of the campaign with the same steadiness and perseverance that he had shown in the command of the army. At length, the Russian army halted. Miloradowitch, sixteen thousand recruits, and a vast multitude of peasants bearing the cross and shouting, "It is the will of God," repaired to the plain of Borodino, which was already broken up and formed into entrenchments. Napoleon announced an approaching battle to the army. He allowed them two days to rest, to prepare their arms, and collect provisions; at the same time warning the detachments sent off for supplies, that if they did not return on the morrow, they would deprive themselves of the honour of fighting. He then employed himself in surveying the environs of his head-quarters. He remarked the advance which they exhibited in agriculture; but at the sight of the Gjatz which pours its current into the Wolga, the early and habitual feelings of glory superseded in the conqueror of so many rivers every other sentiment, and he expressed a lofty complacency in having become the lord of those waters which were destined to visit Asia, as if they were

flowing on to announce to that quarter of the world his fame and conquests, and to open a passage for him to it.

On the 4th of September, the army, still divided into three columns, left Gjatz and its environs. Murat had advanced a few leagues onward. Since Kutusof's arrival, troops of Cossacks had hovered about the heads of the French columns. Murat was vexed at seeing his cavalry compelled to attack so contemptible an adversary. It is asserted that on this day, under one of those impulses which would have become the age of chivalry, he darted suddenly and alone towards their line, halted at only a few paces from it, and there, waving his sword, intimated his orders for them to withdraw with an air and gesture so commanding that the barbarians instantly retired in astonishment. He had proceeded but a little way further, when he was compelled to halt at Griednewa. A deep ravine was here obstinately defended by Konownitzin; and the advanced-guard of the Viceroy coming up had engaged with the Cossacks, who for a wonder stood their ground. Platof afterwards related that in this affair an officer near him was wounded, who immediately ordered the sorcerer who accompanied him to be soundly beaten in the presence of the whole body of Cossacks for not having turned aside the ball by his incantations, as he had been expressly charged to do! Konownitzin withdrew; and on the 5th his bloody track was traced as far as the enormous monastery of Kolotskoi, a Gothic building constructed in former ages, when even the temples of religion were not sacred from the fury of domestic war. As the army advanced, they found the whole plain infested by clouds of Cossacks; the corn spoiled, the villages sacked, and the devastation general. These were signs that clearly indicated the field of battle, which Kutusof was preparing for the grand army. Napoleon ascended an eminence from which he surveyed the whole country. From the nature of the ground, the

Kalouga making a sudden turn to the left at Borodino to join the Moskwa, he concluded that the enemy stationed on the heights behind this river, must be strong on their centre and right, and weak on their left. In proof of this, they had here posted a great number of troops, and constructed a redoubt with great care on one side of the high road. Napoleon, as a preliminary step, gave orders for the carrying of this redoubt. The villages and woods were immediately taken possession of. The attack was general. The Russians were driven back on Borodino. The redoubt remained exposed in front of their army. Companys placed his cannon on some high ground which served as a platform to batter it, and as a shelter for his infantry to advance. The 61st marched foremost, and the redoubt was taken at the first onset at the point of the bayonet: but Bagration sent reinforcements, which retook it. Three times did the 61st wrest it from the possession of the Russians, and three times were they driven from it by them. At last, however, they maintained their acquisition, though covered with blood, and nearly half of them destroyed. Next day when the Emperor passed this regiment in review, he inquired where the third battalion was: "It is in the redoubt," replied the colonel. A neighbouring wood still swarmed with riflemen; but at length the attack on Schewardino by Morand and on the woods of Elnia by Poniatowski succeeded in driving back Bagration's troops, and Murat's cavalry swept the plain. The Emperor appointed its station to each corps: the remainder of the army entered into line; and a general discharge of small arms continued till each party had fixed upon its ground and till night fell. One of Davoust's regiments, taking its rank in the foremost line, and deceived by the darkness, marched into the very midst of the Russian cuirassiers, and effected its retreat with difficulty and with considerable loss.

## CHAPTER XLV.

BATTLE OF THE MOSKWA—RETREAT OF THE  
RUSSIANS ON MOSCOW.

THE Emperor encamped behind the army of Italy on the left of the high road; the old guard having formed a square round his tent. As soon as the discharge of small arms had ceased, the fires were kindled. The Emperor slept but for a short time. General Caulaincourt arrived from the captured redoubt. Hardly a single prisoner had fallen into the hands of the French, which was accounted for from the circumstance that the Russians, having been lately accustomed to fight with the Turks, who give no quarter, would rather be killed than surrender. Napoleon on this determined that a battle of artillery would be the surest; and sent orders to hasten on those parks which had not yet come up. On that night a thin, cold rain began to fall, and autumn proclaimed its arrival by violent gusts of wind. A good deal of stress is laid on this circumstance by those who wish to accuse Buonaparte of inertness and indecision two days after, and who to confirm their theory assume a peculiar sympathy between the seasons of life and the seasons of the year. The speculation would be more pertinent if he had lost the battle, or if he had not lost another nearer to the solstice. It is certain from better authority that he had a severe cold on the morning of the 7th, if that must be supposed to have thrown a damp upon his faculties, or if his scruples and suspense (whatever they might be) did not arise from another cause, the seeing a still more formidable enemy—the

hatred, fear, and despair of a whole people, and the very genius of barbarous desolation standing aghast behind the physical force opposed to him. This in truth waited for him in the sullen background, and he was likely to see and feel it sooner than others. He himself calls the battle of the Moskwa "the most brilliant of all his feats of arms;" and he would hardly do this, if it had been the least so. It was the most bloody and the hardest-contested, which the French critics consider as a damning circumstance. "The number of the dead," they say, "only proves the determination of the enemy:"—as if French imagination shrunk from the idea even of victory, except over a flying foe. So much has their courage and their sense of glory to do with vanity, and so little with fortitude!

The hostile fires were several times thought to be on the wane during the night; and there was a doubt that they might still retreat before morning. However, the light of the Russian bivouacs was extinguished only by that of returning day. For once there was no occasion to go far in search of them: the sun of the 6th of September rose upon the two armies in the same position in which the preceding day had left them. The Emperor took advantage of the earliest dawn to advance between the two lines, and observe from a succession of eminences the whole front of the enemy's camp. He found the Russians in possession of all the heights on a semicircle of two leagues' extent from the Moskwa to the old Moscow road. Their right bordered the Kalouga from where it discharges itself into the Moskwa as far as Borodino: their centre, from Gorcka to Semenowska, formed the salient part of their line. Their right and their left receded. The Kalouga rendered their right unassailable; and it was too far back to be of much consequence. Barclay commanded the centre on a long level height from Gorcka to the still smoking ruins of the village of Semenowaka, both which places were strongly intrenched,

with a formidable redoubt of twenty-one pieces of cannon to the left of the first, just above Borodino. The Russian left was under the command of Bagration, beginning at Semenowska and ending at Utitsa on the old Moscow road. Two hillocks armed with redoubts were in front of him. This was the most accessible point, since the redoubt taken by the 61st the day before could no longer defend the approaches to it. Tutchkof, it is true, was stationed still farther on the Russian left behind a wood on the old Moscow road, but there was room to pass between him and the last redoubt of Bagration and take the left wing of the enemy in flank. Having concluded his reconnoitring, the Emperor formed his plan. "Eugene," he said, "should be the pivot: the battle must be begun by the right. As soon as under the protection of the woods, it shall have carried the redoubt opposed to it, it must turn to the left, overthrowing and driving back the Russian army upon their right and into the Kalouga." In the course of the night, three batteries, of sixty pieces each, were erected in front of the Russians, two on their left, and one near their centre. As soon as daylight broke, Poniatowski with his Poles had orders to advance on the old Smolensk road, turning the wood on which the French right and the Russian left wing were supported; and the first discharge of his cannon was to be the general signal for battle. The whole of the artillery was then to pour upon the left of the Russians; Davoust, Ney, Murat, lastly, the Emperor with the guard were to precipitate themselves into the openings; and in the confusion the centre and right of the enemy would be uncovered and almost surrounded. This plan, apparently a fine one, was not strictly followed up in the sequel, either from accident, a want of proper energy (as is pretended), or from the stubborn resistance of the adversary.

The Emperor was on the heights of Borodino, taking a last survey of the field of battle, when Da-

voust, who had also been examining the ground where he was to act, came hastily up to him with a proposal for turning the whole left of the Russian army with forty thousand men. But Napoleon, after listening to the Marshal with great attention, replied, "It was too extensive a movement;" and on Davoust's persisting, exclaimed rather sharply, "Ah! you are always for turning the enemy: it is too hazardous a manœuvre." Murat was still convinced that the Russians would retreat before the next morning: Rapp was of a different opinion; and the Emperor again going near to reconnoitre (though with only a few attendants) was recognised by the Russian batteries, and the discharge of one of their cannon was the only sound that broke the silence of the day! So still was the calm before the tempest! No longer (from what he had observed) entertaining the slightest doubt about a battle, he returned to his tent to dictate the order of it. He had surveyed the two armies, and considered them nearly equal: about a hundred and twenty thousand men and six hundred pieces of cannon on each side. Or if the Russians had more men, he had more soldiers: the one were prepared to die, the others resolved to conquer. That same evening he issued the following proclamation, which was read to the army the next morning: "Soldiers! you have now before you the battle which you have so long desired. From this moment the victory depends upon yourselves. It is necessary for us: it will bring us abundance, good winter-quarters, and a speedy return to our country. Act as you did at Austerlitz, Friedland, Witepsk, and Smolensk; and let remotest posterity cite your conduct on this day. Let it be said of each of you, *He was at the great battle under the walls of Moscow.*"

An extraordinary movement had been observed the same day in the enemy's camp. Kutusof surrounded with his priests and with the pomp of religion, had paraded an image of the Virgin, the protectress of

Smolensk, through the whole army, pretending it was saved by nothing short of a miracle, and working up the feelings of his audience to a pitch of frenzy against the French as incendiaries, arch-rebels, and sacrilegious disturbers of the sacred soil. All this had its desired and natural effect; for there is nothing so credulous as ignorance; no hatred so strong as that of names; no obedience like that of slaves; no horror like that of barbarians against all that they themselves are not accustomed to. The liberty for which these people fought was that of being sold like cattle in the market; their only country was the estate on which they were the live-stock; their title to a reversion in the skies their being deprived of everything on earth; the invasion of their territory the more shocking as they were convinced they had a perfect right at the call of their leaders to invade and ravage every other country. I do not complain of their fanaticism or self-devotion, for I hold all courage, all attachment to be so far good; what I complain of is that liberty, truth, justice (when it comes to their turn) want the same gross instincts to defend them. Is passion merely brutal? Or has not reason too a spark of ethereal fire? It happened by mere chance that on the same day the Emperor had received from Paris the portrait of the young King of Rome painted by Gerard. The person who brought it supposed that being so near a great battle, he would put off the opening of the case containing it for some days; but he had it brought to his tent immediately, and expressed the greatest satisfaction at seeing it. He had it placed on a chair outside his tent that the officers and soldiers of the guard might take a view of it, and said to those about him, "*Gentlemen, if my son were fifteen, believe me he would be here in the midst of so many brave men otherwise than in a picture.*" In the evening, Fabvier, an aide-de-camp of Marmont, arrived with the news of the defeat of Salamanca, and took part in the battle the next day.

Night now returned, and with it the apprehension of the escape of the Russians. This prevented or interrupted Napoleon's sleep. He repeatedly called out to know the hour, and whether any sounds indicative of retreat had been heard. Another care then assailed him, which was the weak and destitute state of the troops; and he sent and ordered three days' provisions to be immediately distributed to the guard, and soon after rose himself to see if the sentinels near his tent had received them. He asked Rapp, whether he thought they should gain the victory? "Undoubtedly," replied the general; "but it will be a bloody one." Fatigue and anxiety had brought on a feverish irritation and a violent thirst, which he in vain endeavoured to quench during the night. At length, five o'clock arrived. One of Ney's officers came to announce that the Marshal had the Russians still in view, and to request leave to begin the attack. This intelligence revived the Emperor. He instantly rose, summoned his officers around him, and leaving his tent exclaimed, "At last we have them! March! We will to-day open for ourselves the gates of Moscow!"

It was half-past five in the morning when Napoleon arrived near the redoubt, which was captured on the 5th of September. The day dawned, and the Emperor pointing to the east, said to his officers, "There is the sun of Austerlitz." But it came directly in the faces of the French and was of advantage to their enemies. In the night the batteries had not been placed far enough in advance; it was necessary to push them forward, which the Russians did not attempt to hinder, seeming fearful to begin first. While the Emperor was waiting for the sound of Poniatowski's cannon on his right, the battle on a sudden began on his left, one of Prince Eugene's regiments, the 106th, having rushed over the bridge of Borodino notwithstanding the efforts of the officers to keep it back, and attacked the heights of Gorcka, where it would have been

destroyed, had not the 92nd hastened to its relief. Seeing the action thus begun, and concluding that Poniatowski was by this time engaged on the old Moscow road, Buonaparte gave the expected signal for attack. In the midst of the thunder that instantly rose on all sides from the previously peaceful plain and silent hills, Davoust with the divisions Compans, Dessaix, and thirty cannon at their head, advanced rapidly upon the first Russian redoubt. Their object was to reach the fire of the enemy, and at once silence it. But Compans was wounded with many of the bravest of his troops: and Rapp coming forward to take his place, and urging on the men with fixed bayonets, and at a running pace, was the first to reach the redoubt, where he also was wounded. It was the twenty-second time he had been so. A third general who succeeded him fell also. Rapp was conveyed to the Emperor, who exclaimed, "What! Rapp, always wounded? But how are they going on above there?" The aide-de-camp replied that the guard was wanted to finish the business. "No," said Napoleon, "I will take good care of that; I will gain the battle without them." Ney with his three divisions, reduced to ten thousand men, hastened to the succour of Davoust, and the fire of the enemy was thus diverted. The 57th Compans, finding itself supported, rushed on against the Russian intrenchments, scaled them, and coming in contact with the enemy, drove them back at the point of the bayonet, and killed great numbers. Ney then attacked and carried the two other redoubts.

It was now midday. The left of the Russians being thus forced and the plain open, the Emperor ordered Murat to advance with his cavalry and complete the business. That prince was almost in the same instant seen on the heights; when the second Russian line and some reinforcements sent by Tchit-chakof coming up to the assistance of the first, the French received a check in the first flush of their

victory, and retreated. The Westphalians, whom Napoleon had just sent to succour Poniatowski, and who were traversing the neighbouring wood, from the direction in which the Poles were moving, taking them for the enemy, fired upon them and increased the confusion. Murat narrowly escaped being taken by the Russians by throwing himself into the redoubt, where, with a few men, he defended himself as well as he could with mingled bravery and ostentatious defiance, till Ney came to his assistance. In an hour after by obstinate and repeated charges he had effected the entire defeat of the Russian left wing. But the heights of the ruined village of Semenowska, where their centre commenced, were still untouched; and, defended by continual reinforcements sent by Kutusof, poured a dreadful fire upon Ney and Murat. It was necessary to carry that position. Dufour and the 15th light troops were the first to mount the ascent, and dislodge the Russians. General Friand with some of Davoust's infantry supported this attempt, and although wounded, ensured its success.

Murat and Ney were now exhausted, and sent to Napoleon for fresh supplies, who is said on this occasion to have hesitated, thinking that the troops of Friand and Maubourg already upon the heights would be sufficient to maintain them. Kutusof profiting by the delay summoned all his reserves to the assistance of Bagration, who was enabled to reform his line from the great battery in the middle to the wood near Psarewo on his left; and pushed on his infantry, cavalry, and artillery in one grand and mighty effort against the French. Ney and Murat withstood the rushing tempest; it was as much as they could do. Friand's soldiers, ranged in front of Semenowska, repulsed the first charges; but being assailed by a storm of balls and grape-shot, they were daunted; and one of their chiefs saying to Murat who rode up at that instant, "You see we can stay no longer here!" The king replied, "I can stay here very well myself."

The officer rebuked by these words, coolly answered, "It is right ! Soldiers, face about ! Let us advance to be killed !" Murat had sent Borelli again to the Emperor, who still demurred, saying "that the hour of his battle had not yet arrived," though some of the enemy's balls had just then come and stopped at his feet, showing that they were gaining ground. At length he gave Lauriston permission to advance the artillery of the reserve to the heights. This, indeed, appeared to him so important that he presently after urged it with marks of impatience. The generals of artillery soon crowned the crests of the hills. Eighty pieces of cannon discharged their contents at once. The Russian cavalry advanced the first against this brazen barrier ; but were obliged to retire in order to escape utter destruction. The infantry then came on in thick masses, in which, though the French batteries made deep and wide openings, yet they still came on ; and though divided every instant by death, they still closed their ranks over it, trampling it (as it were) in scorn under their feet. At last they halted, not daring to advance, resolved not to turn back ; and Bagration being about this time wounded, either through want of a leader, or stupefaction, or terror, they stood for two entire hours to be cut in pieces, without any other movement than the falling of the men, exciting the pity and wonder of their enemies. The ammunition being by this time nearly gone, Ney extended his right to turn the left of the new front opposed to him ; Davoust and Murat seconded the attempt, and completed the defeat of what remained of Bagration's troops.

The battle was then over in the plain, and became concentrated near the great redoubt, which Barclay defended with pertinacity against Prince Eugene. The latter immediately after the taking of Borodino had passed the Kalouga in front of this redoubt, where the Russians had relied more especially on the

steep heights, surrounded by deep and muddy ravines, upon the exhausted state of the French, and on eighty pieces of heavy cannon which lined the ridge of the redoubt, now exhibiting all the murderous array of steel and fire. But these powerful defences failed them unexpectedly. Surprised by one of those onsets in which the French excel, they on a sudden saw Morand's soldiers (eighteen hundred men of the 30th regiment with General Bonnamy at their head) in the midst of them, and fled with precipitation and terror. In this attack Fabvier, the aide-de-camp of Marmont, who had arrived the day before from Spain, particularly distinguished himself. This happened early in the morning; and the attack was more vigorous and successful on that point than had been intended. Morand found himself alone in front of several Russian lines; and Kutusof and Yerndof recovering from their panic, turned round upon the French. The 30th regiment had to defend itself against an army. But Prince Eugene with its remains and the reinforcements that arrived, maintained himself on the slope of the redoubt for four hours against all that war could display of means, of effort, and of fury. At one time his attention was called off by an alarm of some thousands of Cossacks appearing on his left; but they were soon dispersed. General Montbrun had received orders to attack the redoubt in flank with a body of cavalry. Two hours after, news was brought to Napoleon of his death. He fixed on General Caulaincourt to succeed him, who was overjoyed at the appointment. While the light cavalry was pushing its advantages, he was to turn suddenly to the left with his cuirassiers, and take the formidable redoubt in the rear which Prince Eugene was still in vain attacking in front. Caulaincourt, on receiving his instructions, called out, "You shall see me there immediately, dead or alive!" He instantly set forward, overthrowing in his way all that opposed him. Then turning suddenly to the left, he was the first man to

penetrate the bloody redoubt, where almost at the instant a musket ball mortally wounded him. His conquest became his tomb. Intelligence of this victory and loss soon reached the Emperor. His brother, the grand equerry, heard it, and was much affected. Buonaparte asked him, in a low tone, "Would he wish to withdraw?" But he merely lifted his hat, to show that he declined the offer.

While the cavalry were executing this decisive charge, the Viceroy had nearly reached the mouth of the battery, when suddenly he perceived its fire extinguished, its smoke dispersed, and the crest of the acclivity shining with the moveable and polished brass which covered the cuirassiers. Those heights, which had hitherto been Russian, had become French. He hastened to share the victory, to complete it, and to secure the new position. The Russians, however, were by no means disposed to abandon it easily. They withdrew sullenly, like men bent on resistance and revenge. Fortunately for the French, their last column had presented itself near Semenowska and the great redoubt without artillery, which enabled Belliard with thirty pieces of cannon almost literally to blow them into the air. Grouchy at the same time, swept the plain with his cavalry. The Viceroy followed Barclay's retreat at a distance, glad to let him escape. The sounds of the firing became weaker and less frequent. Officers came in from every part of the field. Poniatowski and Sebastiani, after an obstinate struggle, had on their side also conquered. The enemy had halted and was intrenching himself in a new position; the day was drawing to a close, and the battle was ended. It was about four o'clock. The Emperor called Marshal Mortier to him, and ordered him to keep the field with the young guard, but under no circumstances either to advance or retreat. He then mounted his horse, and rode over the field of battle, showing the most humane attention to the wounded, remarking on the number of the

slain, and seeming to think that his victory had cost him too dear. It is calculated that twenty thousand French and thirty thousand Russians fell in this battle, and that not fewer than fifty-five thousand cannon-balls were fired on each side. During the whole day (according to some accounts) his generals teased Napoleon to employ the guard, which he as constantly refused, saying at one time that "he did not sufficiently see the state of his chess-board;" and at another asking, "but how if there should be another battle to-morrow?" Murat after the battle was over, wanted to take horse, pursue the enemy, and annihilate them as they were passing the Moskwa; to which Buonaparte only replied by a smile. The answer to all these hypercriticisms on Napoleon's want of resolution and the incompleteness of the victory seems to be the burning of Moscow. That must surely have been a great and decisive victory which left the enemy no other resource between them and total subjugation than the destruction of their capital. But this catastrophe gave the finishing blow to French vanity and to French frivolity; and it was then thought necessary to find excuses for the result in the conduct of their leader, who (God save the mark!) was not a Frenchman. Besides, the accounts are evidently warped and coloured to suit a purpose. For instance, Montbrun and Caulaincourt, who fell in the assault on the redoubt, are represented as acting under the immediate direction and appointment of Murat, while not a word is said of Buonaparte, who is kept quite in the back-ground, ignorant and indifferent to what was going on, listlessly walking backwards and forwards, or sitting idly in a chair, unable to support himself or the weather. Whereas the fact is that both these generals went from the very spot where he was, selected and encouraged by the Emperor himself; and under that animating influence parted like the lightning to the war. Davoust, who had been hurt by a fall from his horse, and who would hardly have let

him sink into a lethargy, could not keep up with Napoleon on the little platform on which he walked, from his incessant motion. When breakfast was offered him at noon by his faithful prefect of the palace, he refused because the battle was not yet won. He afterwards tasted some bread and wine without water, and at ten had taken a glass of punch, from being troubled with a severe cold. He supped in his tent at seven in the evening with Berthier and Davoust, when he was remarked to have an air of fatigue and chagrin, which was very uncommon in him. He then dictated the bulletin of the battle. If, however, he was oppressed on this occasion with "a crust of regality," with a sense of assumed dignity and superiority without the spirit to make it good, it was the only occasion on which he could be charged with this infirmity; adversity soon shook it from him; and he never was more like himself than in his latter campaigns. In fine, if Buonaparte failed (as is insinuated) because he was not a Frenchman, there are surely plenty to take his place: or is it that there are so many who think they could, that they cannot to this hour settle the precedence among themselves?

Murat the next day followed up the rear-guard of the Russians as far as Mojaisk. But no traces of them were found on the road. They had taken up a position in front of the walls of that town, while Kutusof with the whole Russian army appeared on the heights beyond. Murat wished to dash forward and attack the enemy, though a deep ravine lay between them, but was prevented by his generals. Some skirmishing notwithstanding took place, in which Belliard was wounded. The Emperor did not arrive on the field of battle before night, and slept at a village within reach of the enemy's fire. On the 9th of September, Mojaisk was still standing, though deserted like the rest, except by the sick and wounded, on whose account it had been spared out of humanity by the Russians; but in their eagerness to assail the

first French who entered the town, which they did with shells, they set fire to it. While some were endeavouring to extinguish the flames, fifty *voltigeurs* of the 33rd climbed the heights which were occupied by the enemy's cavalry and artillery. This *melodramatic* action excited the astonishment of the Russians and the admiration of the French. After pistolling a Russian officer who summoned them to surrender, after being lost in the black mass of cavalry that enveloped them, they at length emerged to sight amidst the acclamations of the French army, who were lookers-on ; and the Russian rear-guard retired in amazement, leaving them masters of a field of battle in which they occupied only a few feet. When the Russians perceived that a serious attack upon them was intended, they disappeared as usual without leaving any tokens of their flight. It was doubtful whether they had taken the road to Moscow or Kalouga ; but Murat and Mortier took that to Moscow at all hazards, for two days marching forward and eating nothing but pounded corn and horse-flesh. The army of Italy was advancing some leagues to the left of the high road. Near Krymskoie, on the 11th of September, the Russians again came in sight, and Murat, drunk with the fumes of gunpowder, and absolutely bent on engaging, sacrificed without any object two thousand of the young guard, who had been kept back so scrupulously on the day of the great battle. Mortier, almost in a state of frenzy, wrote to the Emperor that he never again would obey Murat. Buonaparte was detained three days at Mojaisk by a cold and fever, shut up in his chamber, writing orders on slips of paper or dictating to seven persons at a time. He was so hoarse that he could with difficulty be understood ; but while Bessieres was enumerating to him the generals who had been lately wounded in battle, he, from the mere vehemence of emotion, recovered his voice all at once, and said, " When we have been eight days at Moscow, that will be all over."

He however wrote to Marshal Victor to hasten forward the men to Smolensk that they might be within reach of Moscow. He now learned that Kutusof had not turned on his right flank towards Kalouga, as he feared, but had been regularly receding ; and that Murat was within two days' march of Moscow. That great name and the great hope which he attached to it, revived his strength and spirits, and on the 12th he was well enough to set off to rejoin the advanced-guard.

## CHAPTER XLVI.

## BURNING OF MOSCOW.

Moscow first seen by the French ; entry of the army; burning of Moscow ; circumstances which led to the catastrophe.

ON the 14th of September, Napoleon rejoined his advanced-guard. He mounted his horse a few leagues from Moscow, and marched slowly and circumspectly, expecting the enemy and a battle. The ground was favourable, and works had been marked out ; but everything had been abandoned, and not an individual was to be met with. At length, the last height had been gained that is contiguous to Moscow, and commands it : it is called the "Mount of Salvation," because from the top of it, at the sight of their holy city, the inhabitants make the sign of the cross, and prostrate themselves on the ground. The light troops soon reached the summit. It was two o'clock, and the great city was glittering with a thousand colours in the sun. Struck with astonishment at the spectacle, they halted, and exclaimed in admiration, "Moscow ! Moscow !" All then quickened their pace, and at length ran forward in disorder, till at last the whole army, clapping their hands, repeated the exclamation in a transport of joy ! as mariners cry "Land ! Land !" at the end of a long and dangerous voyage. At the sight of this golden city, this brilliant clasp of Europe and Asia ; this superb emporium where the luxury, the customs, and the arts of the two finest divisions of the globe meet : a city admirable in itself, but more so in the wide waste that surrounds it (that, like an isthmus, unites the extremes of barbarism and

wealth, the north and the south, the east and the west, antiquity and new-born empire, the crescent with the cross, the palaces of the Cæsars with the halls of Runic superstition), the French army halted (as well they might) with feelings of proud and conscious exultation. What a day of glory was that—to be succeeded by what a fall—which was not unnatural neither, for the height of glory is only built on the extreme verge of danger and difficulty! Over this vast and novel scene, which rose at once to the pomp of history, they fancied themselves moving in splendid procession, amidst the acclamation of surrounding nations: here was the termination which had been promised to all their labours; here they ought to stop, as they could no longer surpass themselves or be surpassed by others. At this moment of enthusiasm, all losses and sufferings were forgotten. It seemed impossible to purchase, at too dear a rate, the proud satisfaction of being able to say for the remainder of their lives, “I belonged to the army of Moscow.”

Napoleon himself hastened forward to the view. He stopped in evident transport: an exclamation of self-congratulation fell from his lips. The marshals, too, gathered round him with delight, eager to pay homage to his success. But in the mind of Napoleon the first burst of feeling was never of long duration, as he had too many important concerns to attend to, to give himself up entirely to his sensations. His first exclamation was, “There, at last, then, is that famous city!” And his second, “It was high time!” His eye was now intently fixed on that capital, where he imagined that he saw the whole Russian empire. Those walls enclosed the whole of his hopes, peace, the expenses of the war, and immortal glory. When, then, would its gates open, and a deputation issue from it, to lay its wealth, its population, its senate, and its chief nobility at his feet? Already, both on his left and on his right, he saw the hostile city attacked by Prince Eugene and Poniatowski, and in

front Murat had reached the suburbs ; yet there was not the slightest appearance of anything like a pacific overture. No one had approached but an officer from Miloradowich, to say that he would set fire to the city, if he were not allowed time to evacuate it. The foremost troops of the two armies were for a short time intermingled. Murat was recognised by the Cossacks, who crowded around him to extol his bravery and admire his finery. He gave them his watch and those of his officers. One of them called him his *Hetman*.

In the meantime, the day was passing away, and the Emperor's anxiety increased. The army became impatient. A few officers penetrated within the walls. "Moscow was deserted." At this intelligence, which he repelled with considerable vehemence, but which was confirmed by various reports, Napoleon descended the *Mount of Salvation*, and advanced towards the Dorogomilow gate. He called aloud to Daru, and said, "Moscow deserted ! A most unlikely event ! We must enter it, and ascertain the fact. Go, and bring the *boyars* before me." He would not believe that these men had all fled. How, indeed, was it possible to conceive, that so many sumptuous palaces and splendid temples and wealthy factories should be abandoned by the owners, like the miserable huts which the army had passed on their march ? Daru had now returned, having failed in his mission. Not a single Muscovite was to be found : no smoke was seen ascending from the meanest hearth ; nor was the slightest noise to be heard throughout that populous and extensive city ; its three hundred thousand inhabitants seemed all dumb and motionless, as by enchantment. It was the silence of the desert. Napoleon still persisted, till an officer went and brought before him half a dozen miserable objects, who were the only inhabitants he could find. He then no longer doubted the fact, shrugged his shoulders, and contented himself with saying, "The Russians are as yet little

aware what effect the taking of their capital will have upon them."

Murat, with his long and heavy column of cavalry, had entered Moscow for more than an hour. They made their way into that gigantic body, and found it as yet uninjured, but inanimate. Struck with surprise at the mighty solitude, they marched on in silence, and listened to the sound of their horses' feet, re-echoed from tenantless palaces. On a sudden, the fire of small arms attracted their attention. The column halted. Its hindmost horses still covered the plain. Its centre was passing through one of the longest streets of the city: its head was near the Kremlin. The gates of that citadel appeared to be shut: but from within the enclosure proceeded the most savage yells, and a few men and women of the most disgusting aspect, drunk, and uttering frightful imprecations, were observed, fully armed, upon the walls. Murat sent them offers of peace, but in vain; and it became necessary to force the gates with cannon. One of these squalid-looking wretches rushed upon the King of Naples, and attempted twice to kill one of his officers, flying at him like a wild beast, and endeavouring to tear him with his teeth, after his arms were pinioned. Here also were found five hundred recruits, whom the Russians had left behind; and several thousand stragglers and deserters were taken and set at liberty by the advanced-guard, who afterwards rejoined their countrymen. Murat, detained only a short time by the capture of the Kremlin, passed hastily on by the road to Voladimir and Asia, in pursuit of the enemy.

Napoleon did not enter Moscow before night. He stopped at one of the first houses in the Dorogomilow suburb. He there appointed Marshal Mortier governor of that capital. "Above all," said he, "no pillage. Your head shall answer for it. Defend Moscow both against friends and foes." During the night, unfavourable reports came in in rapid succession.

Some Frenchmen, who had been residents in the country, and even an officer of the police, announced the intended burning. The Emperor slept little, called for his attendants every half hour, to make them repeat the ominous intelligence they had heard, but at last wrapped himself up in incredulity ; when, about two o'clock, he was apprised that the flames had broken out. It was at the merchants' palace or Exchange, in the centre of the city and most opulent quarter of it. He immediately gave orders, and dispatched messages with great promptitude. As soon as daylight appeared he hastened to the city himself, and severely menaced the young guard and Mortier. The marshal showed him houses covered with iron roofs ; closely shut up, and without any marks of violence or an attempt to break into them ; yet a black smoke was already issuing from them. Napoleon entered the Kremlin, thoughtful and uneasy. At the sight of this palace, at once of gothic and modern architecture, founded by the Romanofs and Rurics, of their still extant throne, of the Cross of the great Ivan, and of the most beautiful part of the city, of which the Kremlin commands a view, his hopes revived. He was heard to say, "I am at length, then, in Moscow ; in the ancient city of the Czars ; in the Kremlin." He examined every part with an eager curiosity and a lofty feeling of complacency. In a moment of satisfaction and triumph, he addressed a pacific overture to the Emperor Alexander. A Russian officer of rank, who had just been discovered in the great hospital, was made the bearer of it.

Daylight favoured the exertions of the Duke of Treviso, who succeeded in checking the flames. The incendiaries kept themselves so well concealed, that their existence was much doubted. At length, order was re-established, apprehensions dispelled, and every one betook himself to rest in the best quarters he could find, and determined to make the most of his present situation. Two officers, who had taken up

their quarters in one of the buildings of the Kremlin, overlooking the north and west, were awakened about midnight by an overpowering light. They instantly looked out, and saw palaces enveloped in flames, which, after exhibiting all their striking and grotesque architecture in a glare of light, speedily converted them into ashes. The wind being in the north, drove the flames directly upon the Kremlin ; so that the two Frenchmen felt considerable alarm for that vast enclosure of buildings, where the choicest troops of the army and their renowned commander were reposing. Already the burning flakes and brands began to be carried towards the roofs of the Kremlin, when the wind suddenly shifting, impelled the mischief in a different direction. The officers, satisfied of their own security, said, "Let others look to it now," and again fell asleep. But they were soon after roused by a new and more vivid burst of light, and saw flames rising in the opposite quarter, which still menaced the Kremlin. Three times the wind shifted ; and each time these stubborn and avenging fires, as if attracted by the size of the building or by what it contained, pointed to the Kremlin. An alarming and awful suspicion now darted on their minds. The Muscovites, informed of the rash and dangerous negligence of their enemies, had possibly conceived the idea of destroying the soldiery together with the city, as they lay overpowered by wine, fatigue, and sleep ; or rather, perhaps, they had expected to involve Napoleon himself in the catastrophe. Moscow seemed no inadequate funeral pile for so mighty a foe. Such a sacrifice might indeed have been made at a cheaper rate than that which was actually paid for it. Not only did the Kremlin enclose a magazine of powder, unknown to the French, but, through inattention, that very same night a whole park of artillery had been stationed under Napoleon's windows. If a single spark out of the myriads that were flying over their heads had dropped upon one of the *caissons*, the

flower of the army, with the Emperor, must have been destroyed.

At length day appeared. It came to add to the horrors of the scene, while it dimmed its splendour. Many of the officers took shelter in the halls of the palace. The chiefs, including Mortier, overcome with the exertions which they had made for six-and-thirty hours, returned to the Kremlin in a state of exhaustion and despair. All were silent; but they inwardly blamed themselves as authors of the disaster. It was supposed that the neglect and intoxication of the soldiers must have commenced what the tempest had aggravated; and they began to regard themselves and to imagine that they would be regarded by all Europe with a sort of horror. But from these painful reflections they were relieved by the accounts which came in fast, and were more and more confirmed, that the Russians were alone chargeable with the calamity. On the first night, between the 14th and 15th, a globe of fire had been let down on the palace of Prince Trubetskoi, and had consumed it. This was the signal for setting fire to the Exchange. Russian police-officers had been seen stirring up the flames with lances dipped in pitch. When the French soldiers tried to get into a house seemingly uninhabited, they were frequently driven back, either by the smoke issuing from it, or by shells bursting within it. A number of frantic men and women were seen roaming amid the flames, with flambeaux in their hands, spreading the work of destruction, and thus completing an image of the infernal world. It appeared that these banditti had been let loose from prison to execute a design, which it exhausted all the fortitude of patriotism or virtue barely to conceive. Orders were given to try and shoot every incendiary on the spot. The army was drawn out; the old guard had taken arms; alarm, astonishment, mortification filled every breast. Napoleon, whose sleep no one had ventured to disturb during the night, was awoke by the double light of

day and of the conflagration. Vexed and irritated at first, he was bent on mastering the flames; but he soon yielded to what was absolutely inevitable. Having conquered his enemies by inflicting on them all the terrors of regular warfare, he saw that they were determined to defeat him by inflicting still greater evils on themselves. For once he found himself surpassed by barbarous daring and resolution.

The mighty conquest, for which he had sacrificed so much, and which he had at last achieved, was now vanishing from him in a whirlwind of smoke and flame. He was in a state of excessive agitation, and seemed in a manner parched up by the flames with which he was surrounded. He paced the apartments with hurried steps, quitted and resumed his seat, and left business of the most pressing urgency to run to the windows and observe the progress of the fire; his abrupt and eager movements indicated the trouble of his mind, while he gave vent to his oppressed and labouring feelings in short and broken exclamations: —“What a frightful spectacle! To have done it themselves! Such a number of palaces! They are genuine Scythians!” Between him and the fire there was a large and open piece of ground, close to which was the Moskwa with its two quays; yet the glasses of the windows against which he leaned were so violently heated that he could not touch them with his hand. A report was now spread that the Kremlin was undermined: some of the attendants nearly lost their senses through terror; the military waited with firmness whatever doom fate and the Emperor should assign them: Buonaparte only noticed the alarm with a distrustful smile. He seemed determined to keep possession of his conquest, though the fire gained ground every moment; seizing the bridges, all the accesses to the fortress, the neighbouring houses, and holding him almost a prisoner in the walls of the Kremlin. Night was advancing, and the equinoctial wind blew with redoubled violence. The King of

Naples and Prince Eugene arrived at this crisis ; and, in conjunction with Berthier, in vain urged him to depart. On a sudden a cry was heard that "the Kremlin was on fire." Napoleon went out to see the source of the danger, which had been put a stop to in two places ; but the tower was still burning, and a police-soldier had been detected there who had set it on fire. The exasperated grenadiers dragged him into the adjoining courtyard, where they dispatched him with their bayonets.

This incident determined Napoleon. All, it was evident, was devoted to destruction : even the ancient and sacred pile of the Kremlin. He descended the northern staircase, celebrated for the murder of the Strelitzes, and gave orders for procuring a guide to conduct him out of the city a league on the Petersburg road, to the castle of Petrowski. The flames, however, blocked up the gates of the citadel, and baffled the first attempts made to leave it. After repeated search a postern-gate was discovered leading across the rocks, which opened towards the Moskwa. Through this narrow pass Napoleon, with his officers and guard, effected his escape from the Kremlin. But being nearer to the flames than before, they could neither go back nor stay where they were : how was it possible to cross the waves of that sea of fire ? Even those who had passed through and examined the city, now bewildered by the wind and blinded by the dust, were totally unable distinctly to recognise the several parts, as the streets had disappeared amidst the smoke and ruins. There was, however, no time to be lost : the roaring of the flames grew louder every moment. A single narrow street, crooked and in every part on fire, caught their attention, but looked more like an avenue to the hell before them than a way to avoid it. The Emperor darted forward on foot, without a moment's hesitation, into this formidable pass. He advanced over the scorching cinders which grated under his feet, amidst the perils of dividing roofs and falling

beams, and domes covered with melting iron, all scattering tremendous ruins around him. These ruins often impeded his progress. The flames which were consuming the houses between which the group proceeded, after mounting to the greatest height, were turned back by the force of the wind in arches of fire over their heads. They were walking on a soil of fire, under a sky of fire, and between walls of fire. The heat was tormenting and almost putting out their eyes, which yet it was necessary to keep open and intently fixed on the occurring circumstances. A stifling air, hot ashes, innumerable flakes of fire, made their respiration short, dry, and gasping, and they were half suffocated with the smoke. In this state of inexpressible distress, their guide stopped suddenly, quite at a loss and confounded. And if some pil-laging stragglers, belonging to the first corps, had not recognised the Emperor through the hurricane of flames, the event must have been fatal. They instantly ran to his aid, and led the way to the still smoking ruins of a quarter of the city which had been laid in ashes in the morning. Just at this time they fell in with the Prince of Eckmuhl. This marshal, who had been wounded at the Moskwa, had actually ordered his men to carry him through the flames in order to extricate Napoleon or to perish with him. He threw himself into his arms in a transport of joy. The Emperor received him well, but with a composure which in the midst of danger never deserted him. In order to effect his escape, it was yet necessary to pass by a long convoy of gunpowder, which was defiling amidst the fire. This was not the least of his risks, but it was the last ; and at night they reached Petrowski.

On the following morning, the 17th of September, Napoleon directed his first glances towards Moscow, hoping to find the fire subdued ; but he perceived it still raging in all its violence. The whole city seemed to him one vast “fire-spout,” ascending in awful un-

dulations to the sky, which strongly reflected its terrific glare. The horizon overhead and all round resembled an ocean or huge furnace of fire. He gazed long at the scene in admiration and horror, and at length broke silence by observing, "This forebodes us no common calamity." The effort which he had made to reach Moscow had exhausted all his means of hostility, and Moscow had eluded his grasp. Where turn next? Three plans presented themselves: to march straight to St. Petersburg; to turn to the south and attack Kutusof at Kalouga, or to retreat and fall upon Wittgenstein at Witepsk. The first of these plans was the only one that pleased him. But he understood that his letter to Alexander had passed the Russian advanced posts; and he might receive an answer to it in eight days. Why not then wait those eight days which were required to rest and recruit his army, to collect the spoils of Moscow, the burning of which would but too well justify its pillage, and to give him time to tear his soldiers from so rich a feast of plunder? Yet only the wrecks of that army or that capital were in existence. But he himself and the Kremlin remained. His renown was still unimpaired; and he was persuaded that the two great names of Napoleon and Moscow united would be able to effect everything. He determined therefore, as soon as possible, to return to the Kremlin, which a battalion of the guard had preserved.

The circumstances which led to the catastrophe just described have never been fairly acknowledged or fully cleared up; but little doubt remains upon their general outline and bearing. When Napoleon had separated the Russian army by the suddenness of his movement upon Wilna, Alexander withdrew to Dryssa, and thence to Polotsk. He then left the army to repair to Moscow, preceded by his proclamations, and appeared there first in an assembly of the whole nobility. Having addressed them in person, one simultaneous exclamation burst forth on every side:—

“Sire, ask all! we offer all, accept all!” One of the nobles proposed to raise a militia by giving one peasant out of every twenty-five; but a hundred voices called out that this was not enough; and one serf out of every ten was substituted. Thus slaves, the lords of slaves, defend their country! He then addressed the merchants, and ordered that proclamation to be read to them in which he described Napoleon as “a man of perfidy and blood; a Moloch, who, with treason in his heart and honour on his lips, came to blot out Russia from the face of the world.” At these words the sharp and sanguine countenances of the whole auditory, to whom their long beards gave a striking and almost ferocious appearance, are said to have been absolutely kindled to frenzy. Their eyes glared: they were seized with a convulsion of rage; and their writhing arms, clenched fists, half-stifled curses and gnashing teeth, evinced the maddened violence of their feelings. The account is more like a description of wild beasts than of an assembly of sages, patriots, or men of the world. But it may be observed, that in proportion as men approach to a savage or half-civilized state, the hateful passions and the expression of them are usually predominant; and their credulity and terror are also naturally excited against any supposed violence or wrong meditated by others from their knowledge (the only knowledge they have) of what they themselves are in the hourly habit of suffering or inflicting. Passion, however, from whatever cause, is always energetic, often generous; and nothing makes us sooner forget ourselves than our dread or hatred of others. The president of this meeting (the Stock-Exchange of Moscow) put down his name for fifty thousand roubles, half his fortune; and the rest followed the example.

In the meantime, Smolensk had fallen; Wiazma was in the hands of Napoleon, and terror prevailed at Moscow. The governor-general, Count Rostopchin, sent out a number of lying proclamations of the de-

plorable state of the French army, and of the triumphant resistance made by Kutusof, and indeed had hopes of this resistance to the last ; but in secret he ordered the preparation of an immense quantity of fusees and various other combustible materials. His intention was to convert Moscow itself (if necessary) into a grand infernal machine to blow up Napoleon and his whole army ; or if that should fail, it would deprive them of their expected asylum and resources, and the odium of the act, easily turned upon the French, must rouse the whole population of Russia to vengeance. Such was the scheme planned in silence, carried on with indefatigable perseverance and secrecy, and executed without misgiving and without remorse. There was prodigious, almost inconceivable grandeur in the act, if great sacrifices and great results constitute grandeur. It had the Spartan character. It is the most stupendous violation on record of the precept, "Not to do evil that good may come." It took the greatest responsibility upon itself, and implied the greatest strength of purpose. It was heroic, disinterested, the *ideal* of a barbaric virtue, namely, of that which despairing of good as its habitual aim, hardens itself against evil, and considers in any act only the ultimate end and its own resolution and power to accomplish it. Had his country been worth saving, the Russian could not have taken these means to save it ; but certainly there was no other way. A capital can be burned only in that despotic and uncivilized state of society, where the habitations of men are no more regarded than the stalls of cattle, and the owners as little consulted in the demolition of them. There is only one parallel to this case in all history, and that is the attempt of Guy Faux to blow up the English king and parliament. The one was the fanaticism of religion, the other of patriotism. Both show equal audacity, equal self-reliance, equal deliberation ; Guy Faux gave the strongest pledge of his sincerity, for his life was to have been the forfeit

of his success. He failed, and was hanged, and has been made into a national scarecrow ever since. Count Rostopchin succeeded, and has been canonized by the French historians. They praise him ; why do they not imitate him ? The whole design was carried into effect very methodically and without an appearance of effort. The women had notice to quit the city first, then the priests and infirm went forth in solemn procession, then the nobles and attendants carrying away their wealth, then the citizens and workmen removing the provisions. Many however remained till Kutusof's army had passed through, without giving battle as he had promised ; for the diamonds of ladies of quality were left in the hurry on their toilets. The last act previous to the catastrophe was to throw open the prisons. A squalid and disgusting crew issued tumultuously forth. Two individuals, a Russian and a Frenchman, accused of treason or some political offence, were dragged before Rostopchin. The Russian, the son of a merchant, had been taken in the act of stirring up the people to revolt ; and what was worse, was discovered to be a member of a sect of German *illuminati*, called Martinists, so that the doctrines of equality had penetrated even into Russia. While his examination was going on, his father arrived in haste. Every one expected him to intercede for his son ; but instead of doing so, he loudly demanded his execution. The governor allowed him a few moments to speak to him for the last time and give him his blessing. "I bless the traitor !" said the maddened Russian ; and at the same time turning to his son, he cursed him in a tone and with gestures calculated to inspire the deepest horror. This was the signal for execution. The unhappy victim was struck by a sabre ; but the blow only staggering him, the enraged multitude rushed upon him and tore him to pieces. It is no wonder Mr. Canning exclaimed at the time that "he was glad the first successful resistance to France

had been made by a rude and enslaved country." If the encroachments of liberty had been stopped by the spirit of liberty, his frantic and Gothic triumph would not have been complete. These were the sort of allies worthy of him and his cause—whom he and his friends, having in vain ransacked the centre of civilised Europe in search of them, had at last stirred up at the two extremes of bigotry and barbarism! The Frenchman whose fate remained to be disposed of was almost petrified with terror, when Rostopchin turning towards him said, "As for you who are a Frenchman, it was natural for you to desire the arrival of the French; you are therefore discharged; forget not, however, to tell your countrymen that Russia had but one traitor, who has met with his deserts." The lesson could not be addressed to a people who stood more in need of it, and who seemed to think it incumbent on them in their admiration of the spirit shown by Russia to furnish as many examples as possible of the direct contrary. He then addressed the banditti around him, calling them the children of Russia, who must atone for their past offences by serving their country, assigned them their several tasks, and left the city to its fate.\*

\*O'Meara, in one of his conversations with Napoleon at St. Helena, asked him to what cause he attributed the failure of his expedition to Russia, and he replied, "To the cold, the premature cold, and the burning of Moscow." Although the leading particulars of these events must still be familiar to many of our readers, yet the account of one, who was so intimately connected with them as Napoleon, cannot but be interesting, and we shall quote it.

Speaking of this campaign, he said, "I had made a calculation of the weather for fifty years before, and the extreme cold had never commenced until about the 20th of December, twenty days later than it began this time. While I was at Moscow, the cold was at three of the thermometer, and was such as the French could with pleasure bear; but on the march, the thermometer sunk eighteen degrees, and consequently nearly all the horses perished. In one night I lost thirty thousand. The artillery, of which I had five hundred pieces, was in a great measure obliged to be abandoned: neither ammunition nor provisions could be carried. We could not make a reconnaissance, nor send out an advance of men on horseback to discover the way, through the want of horses. The soldiers

Buonaparte reckons that a hundred thousand of the inhabitants, driven out of Moscow, perished in the woods in the neighbourhood for want of food and shelter. Just before the evacuation of the city, while the people in despair were prostrating themselves before their public altars or the images of their saints in the private habitations, their ears suddenly caught the sounds of shouting and acclamation. They in-

lost their spirits, fell into confusion, and became senseless. The most trifling thing alarmed them. Four or five men were sufficient to frighten a whole battalion. Instead of keeping together, they wandered about in search of fire. Parties when sent out on duty in advance, abandoned their posts, and went to seek the means of warming themselves in the houses. They separated in all directions, became helpless, and fell an easy prey to the enemy. Others lay down, fell asleep, a little blood came from their nostrils, and, sleeping, they died. In this manner thousands perished. The Poles saved some of their horses and artillery, but the French, and the soldiers of the other nations I had with me, were no longer the same men. In particular, the cavalry suffered. Out of forty thousand, I do not think that three thousand were saved.

"Had it not been for that fire at Moscow, I should have succeeded. I would have wintered there. There were in that city about forty thousand citizens who were in a manner slaves: for you must know that the Russian nobility keep their vassals in a sort of slavery. I would have proclaimed liberty to all the slaves in Russia, and abolished vassalage and nobility. This would have procured me the union of an immense and powerful party. I would either have made a peace at Moscow, or else I would have marched the next year to Petersburg. Alexander was assured of it, and sent his diamonds, valuables, and ships to England. Had it not been for that fire, I should have succeeded in everything. I beat them two days before, in a great action at Moskwa; I attacked the Russian army of two hundred and fifty thousand strong, intrenched up to their necks, with ninety thousand, and totally defeated them. Seventy thousand Russians lay upon the field. They had the impudence to say that they had gained the battle, though, two days after, I marched into Moscow.

"I was in the midst of a fine city, provisioned for a year; for in Russia they always lay in provisions for several months before the frost sets in. Stores of all kinds were in plenty. The houses of the inhabitants were well provided, and many had even left their servants to attend upon us. In most of them there was a note left by the proprietor, begging the French officers who took possession to take care of their furniture and other things; that they had left every article necessary for our wants, and hoped to return in a few days, when the Emperor Alexander had accommodated matters, at which time they would be happy to see us. Many ladies remained behind. They knew that I had been at Berlin and Vienna with

stantly ran into the streets and squares to learn the cause. Here were found multitudes of men and women gazing with eagerness and transport upon the cross of the principal church. A vulture was observed to have entangled himself in the chains which supported it, and remained suspended in them. This was hailed as a decisive and cheering omen by a people whose natural superstition was heightened by the momentousness of the crisis. In the same manner as my armies, and that no injury had been done to the inhabitants; and, moreover, they expected a speedy peace. We were in hopes of enjoying ourselves in winter-quarters, with every prospect of success in the spring.

" Two days after our arrival, a fire was discovered, which at first was not supposed to be alarming, but to have been caused by the soldiers kindling their fires too near the houses, which were chiefly of wood. I was angry at this, and issued very strict orders on the subject to the commandants of regiments and others. The next day it had advanced, but still not so as to give serious alarm. However, afraid that it might gain upon us, I went out upon horseback, and gave directions to extinguish it. The next morning a violent wind arose, and the fire spread with the greatest rapidity. Some hundred miscreants, hired for that purpose, dispersed themselves in different parts of the town, and with matches, which they concealed under their cloaks, set fire to as many houses to windward as they could, which was easily done, in consequence of the combustible materials of which they were built. This, together with the violence of the wind, rendered every effort to extinguish the fire ineffectual.

" I myself narrowly escaped with life. In order to show an example, I ventured into the midst of the flames, and had my hair and eyebrows singed, and my clothes burnt off my back; but it was in vain, as they had destroyed most of the pumps, of which there were above a thousand; out of all these, I believe that we could only find one that was serviceable. Besides, the wretches that had been hired by Rostopchin, ran about in every quarter, disseminating fire with their matches, in which they were but too much assisted by the wind.

" This terrible conflagration ruined our prospects. I was prepared for everything but this. It was unforeseen; for who would have thought that a nation would have set its capital on fire? The inhabitants, themselves, however, did all they could to extinguish it, and several of them perished in their endeavours. They also brought before us numbers of the incendiaries with their matches, as amidst such a 'popolazzo' we never could have discovered them ourselves. I caused about two hundred of these wretches to be shot.

" Had it not been for this fatal fire, I had every thing my army wanted; excellent winter-quarters—stores of all kinds were in

the vulture, was God going to deliver Napoleon into their hands. What can subdue a nation who can be thus easily deluded by the grossest appearances, and whose whole physical strength, to inflict or to endure, can be wielded mechanically and in mass in proportion to their want of understanding ? Certainly, ignorance is power.

plenty—and the next year would have decided it. Alexander would have made peace, or I would have been in Petersburg."

Mr. O'Meara asked, if he thought he could entirely subdue Russia. "No," replied Napoleon ; "but I would have caused Russia to make such a peace as suited the interests of France. I was five days too late in quitting Moscow. Several of the generals," continued he, "were burned out of their beds. I myself remained in the Kremlin until surrounded with flames. The fire advanced, seized the Chinese and Indian warehouses, and several stores of wine and spirits, which burst forth in flames, and overwhelmed everything.

"I then retired to a country-house of the Emperor Alexander's, distant about a league from Moscow, and you may figure to yourself the intensity of the fire, when I tell you, that you could scarcely bear your hands upon the walls or windows on the side next to Moscow, in consequence of their heated state. It was the spectacle of a sea and billows of fire—a sky and clouds of flame ; mountains of red rolling flames, like immense waves of the sea, alternately bursting forth, and elevating themselves to skies of fire, and then sinking into the flame below. Oh, it was the most grand, the most sublime, and the most terrific sight the world ever beheld!"

## CHAPTER XLVII.

## THE RETREAT FROM MOSCOW.

The retreat from Moscow ; first fall of snow ; desperate action at Malo-Jaroslavitz ; narrow escape of Napoleon from Cossacks ; explosion of the Kremlin heard by the army ; field of Borodino repassed ; battle of Wiazma ; dreadful sufferings of the army ; Napoleon reaches Smolensk.

NAPOLEON returned to the Kremlin through the camps of his army, which exhibited a very singular appearance, being situated in the midst of fields, in a thick and cold mire, and containing immense fires fed by rich mahogany furniture and gilded sashes and doors. Around these fires, with a litter of damp straw, sheltered only by a few miserable planks fastened together, his soldiers with their officers were to be seen, splashed with dirt and stained with smoke, seated upon superb arm-chairs, or reclining on sofas covered with silk. At their feet, carelessly opened or thrown on heaps, lay Cachmere shawls, the finest furs of Siberia, the gold-stuffs of Persia, and plates of solid silver, from which they had nothing to eat but a black dough baked in ashes, and half-broiled and bloody steaks of horse-flesh. Between the camps and the city were met numerous parties of soldiers, dragging their plunder along with them, or driving before them, like so many beasts of burden, a number of the inhabitants bending under the pillage of their capital. The fire had forced nearly twenty thousand such persons from their hiding-places, who were very humanely treated by the French ; as well as about ten thousand Russian prisoners, who were allowed to wander up and down at random, to share their fires or their

plunder with them. When the marauding ceased, they soon joined their comrades. The Russians are *better haters* than the French.

The pillaging had commenced to a great extent: the chiefs were obliged to shut their eyes to it. Indeed, after what had happened, to forbid it would have been a ridiculous punctilio. The Emperor was stopped in his way by troops of marauders, by groups of soldiers collected near the steps leading to cellars or the doors of palaces or shops, by heaps of furniture, or by stalls raised in the streets and market-places, where the soldiers were exchanging showy and valuable commodities for common necessaries, and rich wines, liqueurs, and bales of merchandise for a loaf of bread. Through such a scene of havoc and confusion Napoleon entered Moscow. He had permitted this licence, thinking it justifiable, and that it might lead to useful discoveries; but when he found that the excesses increased, that the old guard had been hurried into them, and that the Russian peasants, who had begun to bring in provisions, were prevented by fear, he issued severe orders, commanded his guard to keep close to their quarters, and at the first word he was obeyed.

In the meantime, Kutusof had drawn Murat after him towards Kolemna, as far as the spot where the Moskwa divides the road to it. Here, under favour of the night, he turned suddenly to the south, in order to place himself, by way of Podol, between Moscow and Kalouga. This nocturnal march of the Russians showed them their capital in flames, and kindled all their rage against the French as the authors of what they themselves had done. Kutusof was the first to announce the event to Alexander, who was not staggered by it, but vowed redoubled energy and perseverance on hearing of it. Indeed he is supposed to have been no stranger to the design beforehand. In consequence of Kutusof's shifting and circuitous march, Murat lost all traces of him for three days.

The Russian advanced-guard had nearly arrived at Woronowo, belonging to Count Rostopchin, when they were met by the governor, who had been setting fire to that fine seat, and would not suffer it to be extinguished. The French afterwards shuddered to find an inscription on the iron-gate of the church, which was still standing, purporting that such should be the fate of every thing in an invaded country, sooner than it should fall into the hands of the enemy. The moral was perhaps good: but if so, I see no reason why Russia or Count Rostopchin should make a monopoly of it. Would Count Rostopchin extend it to Poland, to France, or any country but Russia? Otherwise, his frenzy was that of a beast of prey, that foams with rage and impatience, after scouring the forest, at being pursued to its den. The "sacred rage" of right is quite another thing. The count himself afterwards went to Paris in the track of an invading army. But it is said neither he nor his sovereign took vengeance by setting fire to that capital. This is true; but the lords of the earth had just then glutted themselves with a prey that took away all appetite for every other—which was no less than the rights and liberties of the whole human race. It is no wonder they were "mild as kings on that their *second* coronation-day!"\* Near this spot Murat came up with Kutusof, and had a smart skirmish with him on the 29th of September, near Czerikowo, and another with Miloradowich on the 4th of October near Winkowo. He was hardly pressed on the latter occasion, and was going to apply for a suspension of arms; but Poniatowski just then coming up, he fought on and repulsed Miloradowich.

The report of each of these affairs had nearly drawn Napoleon into the field. He had written out the

\* When Buonaparte put the crown on his own head, he virtually uncrowned every one of them. This was the hateful point always at issue. With this clue all is clear; without it, all is a disjointed dream.

orders to march ; but twice he burnt them, and seemed still to wait for an answer from Petersburg. He fed his hopes with the recollections of Tilsit and Erfurt. Nor was that all. He could not make up his mind to suspect the pitfall prepared for him till it actually opened. Hitherto he had been uniformly fortunate : the certainty of failure must be as great as that of his success, before he could believe in it. His was indeed a trying situation, with the superstructure of his power and greatness still standing around him, and the foundations crumbling beneath his feet. To dare had been with him so far to conquer, and that in proportion to the imminence of the danger and difficulty. Should he be wanting to himself now ; or be the first to dissolve that spell which genius and fortune had bound around him, and which nothing but equally sad and unforeseen reverses could undo ? His mind also possessed a hidden advantage (without which he could not have been the man he was)—that of employing itself at pleasure on whatever object demanded his attention, and making his will predominate over real or imaginary ills. This faculty, however necessary, may also turn to mischievous account ; since truth, by which action must be regulated, is not a voluntary thing. Paris at this crisis drew off his thoughts from Petersburg. The accumulated affairs which required his care, and the couriers who arrived during the first days of his residence at Moscow in quick succession, greatly assisted in enabling him to bear his suspense. But the promptitude and ease with which he transacted business had soon exhausted this resource ; and shortly after, the messengers were intercepted. The military posts established in four cities which had been reduced to ashes, were found insufficient to protect a route of ninety-three leagues. All this while, no answer had arrived from Alexander. Napoleon's uneasiness increased, and the means of diverting it diminished. The activity of his mind, accustomed to the superintendence of nearly the

whole of Europe, had now no other object than the regulation of a hundred thousand men ; and indeed, so perfect was the organisation of his army, that it was scarcely a matter of business to him. Everything relating to it was arranged and methodised. He was surrounded by ministers who could inform him instantly and at any hour of the day of the position of every individual in it, whether in the morning or evening, whether alone or in company, whether with the regiment, at the hospital, on furlough, or however otherwise disposed of : and this with accuracy all the way from Paris to Moscow. So admirable was the system at that time in force ; and so precise and strict was the chief in exacting obedience to it !

At this period all his proceedings were calculated to persuade the Russians that their formidable enemy meant to establish himself in the heart of their empire. Moscow, although reduced to ashes, received an intendant and municipality. Orders were issued to lay in a stock of provisions for the winter. A theatre was formed in the midst of the ruins. The principal actors of Paris were sent for to perform in it. An Italian singer attempted to revive at the Kremlin the evening entertainments of the Tuileries. By these indications, it is said, Napoleon wished to mislead a government which by the long habitude of ruling a nation immersed in ignorance and error, was more than his match in the arts of deception. The month of September had, however, passed ; and Alexander had not deigned a reply. It was an affront ; and Napoleon felt hurt and irritated. On the 3rd of October he sent for his marshals. As soon as he saw them he said, "Come in, and hear the new plan which I have just formed. Prince Eugene, do you read it." They must burn what yet remained of Moscow, and march by way of Twer upon Petersburg, where Macdonald would come to join them : Murat and Davoust should form the rear-guard. The blank countenances of the generals, however, disclosed their

disapprobation ; they objected the bad roads and the lateness of the season ; and the plan, if Buonaparte ever seriously entertained it, was given up. If the blow could have been aimed sooner, it was the only thing likely to strike a panic and rouse the inertness of Alexander ; it was the only way in which they could do more than they had already done ; and it might possibly have been thought too much to sacrifice two capitals to the inviolate pretensions of the empire, and to a relish for English subsidies. Napoleon then proposed to send Caulaincourt, who was a favourite with Alexander, on a mission to him ; but this officer declined the offer, saying he should fail in it from want of confidence in the result ; to which the Emperor replied, " Well then, I will send Lauriston."

Lauriston repaired with a letter for Alexander, to the Russian advanced-posts on the 15th of October, where he had some difficulty in meeting with Kutusof, who said he had no authority to let him proceed, but that he would forward the letter. Meantime an armistice was proclaimed ; and Murat, who got into the enemy's camp, was flattered by his friends the Cossack chiefs, who even talked of " making him their king !" Buonaparte did not admire this coquetting ; and wished the armistice to be broken off, the terms of which were wholly against the French and in favour of the Russians. Murat himself at last began to feel uneasy. At the casual meetings between the French and Russian officers, though the latter showed a great deal of outward politeness, and a conciliating manner, there was an under-tone in their conversation that was anything but pacific. They pointed to " those horses, still wild-looking and scarcely broken in, and whose long manes swept the dust of the plain. Did not that sufficiently prove that a numerous cavalry was reaching them from the remotest quarters, while the French was hastening to total decay ? " They then spoke of the severity of the winter. " Within a fortnight," they said, " your nails

will fall off, and your weapons drop from your benumbed and lifeless hands." The Cossacks, too, mixed in the discourse, using the style of an Eastern analogue. They asked the French, "If they had not corn, and air, and graves enough, in a word, room enough to live and die in their own country? If so, why did they roam so far from home, and come to fatten a foreign soil with their blood? Such conduct was an act of robbery to their native country: to that they owed, while living, the cultivation, defence, and embellishment of it; and in death, they owed it that body which they had derived from it and had nourished by it, and from which in turn it might derive nourishment itself!" These hints, as well as the language in which they were conveyed, must have been not a little startling to the French. But had these men just risen out of the ground (to which they belonged), that they supposed their own countrymen had never wandered out of their own bounds; that the French could remain perfectly quiet and unmolested within their own territory, if they chose: or that they themselves might not visit France a short time after, without leaving their bones there, as would have been but just by their own reasoning?

The Emperor was made acquainted with these suggestions and warnings; but he constantly disconcerted and repelled them. His uneasiness sometimes vented itself in sharp reproofs and sallies of impatience. He did not brook the Guerilla war, which the Cossacks were carrying on around him during a pretended truce. A hundred and fifty dragoons had been surprised, and their commander taken prisoner by these roving bands: two large convoys had been seized, and Vereia was taken by armed peasants. He rode out in the mornings, and spent a part of the evenings in the society of Count Daru, to whom almost alone he admitted the precariousness of his situation. "Some men," he observed, "conceived he had nothing to do but to march, not considering that

a month was requisite to recruit his army and give time for the evacuation of his hospitals ; and that if he abandoned his wounded, the Cossacks would exercise daily cruelties on the sick and stragglers, and his march would carry the appearance of a flight. That word would resound from one end of Europe to the other, which, full of envy at his success, would, after the first retrograde movement, never rest satisfied with anything short of his absolute ruin." He occupied himself, however, in collecting all the trophies which could be found in Moscow ; and great pains were taken to detach the gigantic cross from the tower of the great Ivan. He intended to adorn the dome of the Invalids with it. With the possession of this monument a Russian superstition connected the salvation of the empire ; and a vast flight of ravens continually hovered over it while it was removing. Napoleon had constant disputes with Count Lobau concerning the army-returns, which he would by no means have made less than they had been. The army, indeed, still presented a noble and imposing appearance. They kept up their spirits, their discipline to the last ; and prided themselves when on parade and under Napoleon's eye, so far from home and after so many difficulties, in the neatness of their dress and the polish of their arms. He was confounded and astonished at the silence and obstinacy of Alexander, which, with the destruction of Moscow, he thought would bring on a convulsion and shake his throne. This, it appeared, was judging of things too much by a common-place standard. It is said that at this period he grew pale with constant and suppressed anxiety, that he sat longer at his meals than usual, and amused himself of an evening in discussing the merits of some new verses just arrived from Paris, or in completing a system of regulations for the *Comédie Française*.

In the midst of these distractions and amusements, suddenly came on the first fall of snow, and with it

fell to the ground all those flattering illusions which he had till then cherished.\* He then thought only of retreat, without, however, even now uttering the obnoxious term, and without any one's being able to wrest a positive order announcing it from him. He merely said that in the course of twenty days it would be necessary for the army to be in winter-quarters; and he also urged forward the departure of the wounded. He told those about him that "he was going to march upon Kutusof, to crush or remove him out of the way, and then to turn suddenly towards Smolensk." But his officers who had hitherto pressed his departure, and who seemed to have no other principle than to dissent from whatever he proposed, now objected to it, and advised him to stay in Moscow, where they could have salt and bread, procure the rest by an extensive system of forage, bury themselves in the cellars of the houses, and in the spring issue forth to complete their conquest. Buonaparte replied that "this was the counsel of a lion: but what would Paris say? What might be going on there, while all intercourse was barred for six months?" So little could he rely on this people, who deserve to be always kept (as they seem at present always likely to be) in a state of pupilage. Soon after a Cossack fired at Murat, which broke off the armistice; and while Napoleon was reviewing the divisions of Ney in the first court of the Kremlin, there was a report of a cannonading near Winkowo. Duroc resolved to inform him of it. The Emperor for a moment changed colour, but instantly recovered himself and proceeded in his review. An aide-de-camp, the young Beranger, now arrived and hastened up to the Emperor. He announced that Murat's troops had been surprised and defeated with great loss, and that he himself was wounded. He had

\* The almanacks for the last fifty years had been carefully consulted; and the winter set in this year a fortnight or three weeks sooner than it had almost ever been known to do.

only been able to rescue the remains of his advanced-guard by reiterated charges against the numerous troops who already occupied the high road behind him, which was his sole retreat. Honour had, however, been saved. The attack in front conducted by Kutusof had been faint: Poniatowski, some leagues to the right, had resisted gloriously. Murat and his carbineers, by efforts more than human, had checked Bagawout, who had been on the point of breaking through the left flank: they had restored the chances of the battle. Claparede and Latour-Maubourg had cleared the defile of Spaskaplia, of which Platof had just gained possession two leagues in the rear of the French line. Two Russian generals had been killed; the loss of the enemy had been considerable; but they retained their title to the victory. Such had been the recommencement of the war. This was on the 18th of October. Napoleon on receiving this intelligence recovered all the fire of his earlier years. A thousand orders, some resulting from a general view of the case, others reaching to its minutest details, all different, yet all in conformity and all necessary, burst at once from his lips; and before night, his whole army was in motion towards Woronowo. Broussier was to take the direction of Fominskoe, and Poniatowski that towards Medyn. The Emperor himself, before daybreak on the 19th of October, quitted Moscow, and exclaimed, "Let us march upon Kalouga; and woe be to those whom I may meet with on my passage!"

There are two roads leading southward from Moscow to Kalouga; the old and the new. It was upon the former that Kutusof had just beaten Murat. By this same road Napoleon set out, announcing to his officers that he was going to regain the frontiers of Poland. by Kalouga, Medyn, Inknowo, Elnia, and Smolensk: then pointing to a sky still without a cloud, he asked them "Whether in that brilliant sun they did not recognise his protecting planet?" But

this appeal to his fortune hardly corresponded with the expression of his countenance. Napoleon, who had entered Moscow with ninety thousand effective men and twenty thousand sick and wounded, quitted it with more than a hundred thousand effective men. He left only twelve hundred sick. His stay, notwithstanding his daily losses, had enabled him to rest his infantry, to complete his stock of ammunition, to increase his force by ten thousand men, and to watch over the recovery or the retreat of the greater part of his wounded. The cavalry and the artillery were not in so good a condition as he wished. From the preceding evening the army had been moving out of Moscow without interruption. In this column of a hundred and forty thousand men, and nearly fifty thousand horses, of every description, a hundred thousand effective troops marching at the head, with their knapsacks and their arms, with above five hundred and fifty field-pieces and two thousand artillery waggons, still bore that character of terrible and warlike array which became the victors of the world ! But the remainder, which bore too great a proportion, resembled a horde of Tartars after a successful invasion. It consisted of three or four almost endless files, of a confused assemblage of calashes, cassoons, elegant carriages, and waggons and carts of every description. Here were seen trophies of Russian, Turkish, and Persian flags, and the gigantic cross of Ivan the Great ; there bearded Russian peasants, driving or carrying the booty, of which they themselves formed part ; at other times soldiers dragging along by main force wheelbarrows filled with everything they could collect ; crowds of recruits of all nations without uniform ; valets swearing in every language, and urging on, by blows and shouts, ponies harnessed with ropes to sumptuous carriages ; a number of French women and children, that had been settled in Moscow, flying from the rage of the Muscovites, and a few Russian girls, voluntary captives.

In spite of the width of the road, and the calls of his escort, the Emperor slowly made his way through this vast multitude: but a narrow pass, a forced march, or a skirmish with a troop of Cossacks, would too soon rid him of this incumbrance.

Napoleon pushed on for several hours on the old road: but having halted in the middle of the day near the castle of Krasno-pachra, he turned suddenly to the right, and with difficulty gained the new road to Kalouga, which place he might reach in one day's march, before Kutusof could get there, who was still expecting him on the old road, where Ney's and Murat's troops had been left to mask his movement. On the 23rd of October, the imperial head-quarters were at Borowsk. This night was one of satisfaction to the Emperor, as he had just learnt that Delzons and his division were in possession of Malo-Jaroslavetz, four leagues in advance, and the only point where Kutusof could cut him off from the new road to Kalouga. The Emperor was at first determined to secure the place in person, but hesitated all the next day (for no assignable reason, except a reluctance to act from motives of safety in one who had never acted but from motives of glory and a sense of superiority), and the next night heard to his extreme annoyance the sounds of an engagement, which proved that the Russians disputed the passage with Delzons. The latter had not gone into the town, which stands on a declivity with a wood and a large plain beyond, and a river below. His bivouacs had been surprised at four in the morning by Doctorof and his troops. Prince Eugene heard the firing at three leagues' distance, and hastened to his relief. As he drew near, a vast moving amphitheatre rose before him: the river Louja marked its foot; from the opposite height a cloud of Russian sharpshooters and their artillery poured down their fire on Delzons. On the plain beyond, Kutusof's whole army advanced rapidly by the Lectazowo road. A severe and desperate conflict

ensued. Delzons and his brother were killed. The French maintained their ground by the judicious manœuvres of Guilleminot, who threw a hundred grenadiers into a churchyard, in the walls of which they made holes for their muskets. Five times the Russians attempted to pass, and five times they were thrown into disorder and repulsed by a well-directed and murderous fire. The whole day the battle wavered; the fourteenth and fifteenth divisions (the last composed of Italian recruits) contending against the increasing numbers of the Russians, who at length descended to the bridge, thinking to carry it, and cut off all retreat. Prince Eugene was reduced to his last reserve; he came into action himself, and by his calls and example rallying his men, the battle was once more carried up the heights; and the Russians, tired out, fell back and concentrated themselves on the Kalouga road, between the woods and Malo-Jaroslavetz. Thus did eighteen thousand French and Italians, huddled together in the bottom of a ravine, defeat fifty thousand Russians placed above their heads, and seconded by all the advantages which a town built on a steep declivity could present. Their loss, however, was great, and, in the circumstances, doubly felt.

The Emperor received the report of this battle in a weaver's hut, a few steps to the right of the high road, on the borders of the rivulet and village of Ghorodinia, and about half a league from Malo-Jaroslavetz. In this half-finished hovel, in a dark and comfortless chamber, divided in two by a tattered cloth, the fate of the army and of Europe was to be decided. The fatal blow was struck, by which all was put to hazard, lost, or to do again. The early part of the night was passed in collecting intelligence. Bessieres had been sent to examine the Russian position, and reported it unassailable. "Did you see rightly?" said the Emperor. "Are you sure? Will you answer for this?" Bessieres repeating his assertion, Napoleon crossed his arms with an air of consternation; his head fell on

his breast, and he seemed lost in his own reflections. It is supposed that he reproached himself with having been anticipated by Kutusof. He is indeed charged with having moved slow on this march. It is no wonder ; since he dragged his falling fortunes—that mighty ruin—after him ! He could hardly, however, make this excuse to himself. He lay down and rose up incessantly ; called for his attendants ; yet not a syllable betrayed his distress. The agitation of his body alone proved the tempest which tossed his mind. About four o'clock in the morning Prince D'Aremberg came to inform him that some Cossacks, under cover of the night and of the woods, were gliding between him and his advanced posts. He disregarded the intelligence, and as soon as the sun was visible above the horizon, mounted his horse, and proceeded towards Malo-Jaroslavetz. In crossing the plain, a confused clamour arose ; and of a sudden Platof, with his Cossacks, mixed with the baggage of the army, and overturning everything in their course, came on with one of their hourras, which was at first taken for cries of "*Vive l'Empereur !*" Rapp had only time to say, "It is they ; turn back ;" and, seizing the bridle of his horse, urged the Emperor to retire. Napoleon's pride could not stoop to this. He put his hand on his sword ; Berthier and the grand equerry did the same ; and placing themselves on the left of the wood, they waited the approach of this wild horde. They were only forty paces off ; and Rapp was wounded by the foremost of them. The courage of about twenty officers and chasseurs, with the eagerness of the barbarians for plunder, saved the Emperor ; the cavalry of the guard coming up, put an end to the affair, and the Cossacks fled, leaving their booty behind them. The Emperor, amazed at the audacity of this attack, halted till the plain was cleared, and then went forward to Malo-Jaroslavetz, when the Viceroy retraced the action of the day before. Never was a field of battle more terribly eloquent ! The glory of it most struck

the Emperor, "which," he said, "belonged wholly to Prince Eugene." He then advanced into the plain above. After carefully examining its openings, and seeing the road to Kalouga closed against him by Kutusof and a hundred and twenty thousand men, that to Medyn by Platof and ten thousand horse, he returned slow and thoughtful to his head-quarters.

Murat, Prince Eugene, Berthier, Davoust, and Bessieres followed him. As ill luck would have it, the miserable dwelling of an obscure artisan gave shelter to an emperor, two kings, and three generals. Napoleon was seated before a table, his head resting on his hands, which concealed his features. The question was, whether they should march upon Smolensk by way of Kalouga, Medyn, or Mojaisk? Murat was the first to break silence, and proposed to pursue their route to Kalouga, and cut his way through the Russians, whom he despised. This advice was checked by Napoleon as too violent, and Bessieres seconded him. Davoust recommended to proceed to Medyn; and this brought on an altercation between him and Murat. The speakers were growing warm, when Napoleon dissolved the council by saying, "It is well, sirs; I will decide." He decided to retreat, and by the road which led him most speedily from the enemy; but it cost him a dreadful effort to give an order so new to him.\* The report of another skirmish with the Cossacks near Borowsk, is said to have been the last motive that induced him to what proved so fatal a course. What is most remarkable is, that he ordered this retreat to the north, at the very moment

\* He is said on this occasion to have lost the use of his senses. It is a pity the accounts in Segur (otherwise so interesting) cannot be implicitly depended upon; but they have an evident bias, and are tinctured by a constant ambition of fine writing and effect. For instance, it is asserted, in describing the interview just mentioned, that "the Emperor remained motionless, absorbed, and apparently insensible to all that passed:" when a little before a speech is put into his mouth in answer to Murat, and another into that of Bessieres, which the Emperor is said to "have approved by his silence." —Vol. ii. p. 110.

that Kutusof and his Russians, weakened by the shock they had received at Malo-Jaroslavetz, were retiring on the south, contrary to the advice of Sir Robert Wilson. Kutusof, in spite of all that this knight-errant could say, had had enough of Napoleon, and was determined to let the winter do the rest. Had the French Emperor known his resolution, he might have fallen upon his troops as they crowded together in disorder to the bridge over the Oka ; or he might himself have effected his retreat by Medyn, in a straight line and unmolested ; and then all might have turned out well.

It was on the 26th of October that the retreat by Mojaisk commenced. Davoust, with twenty-five thousand men, was to form the rear-guard. The troops marched with their eyes on the ground, ashamed and humbled. In the midst of them, their leader in thoughtful silence seemed anxiously to measure his line of communication with the fortresses on the Vistula. In that interval, he had only two resting-places, Smolensk and Minsk. Wittgenstein, at Polotsk, threatened the first ; Tchitchakof, who had reached Bresklitowsky, the second. But he reckoned much on the Duke of Belluno and his thirty-six thousand fresh troops, stationed at Smolensk, in conjunction with whom, with St. Cyr and Macdonald, he might recover his former position on the Dwina and Boristhenes, keep Wittgenstein in check, stop the progress of Kutusof, and menace Alexander in his second capital. He might halt therefore either at Smolensk, or at Minsk, a hundred leagues farther on, where Dombrowski with his Poles near Bobruisk, and Schwartzenberg at the head of fifty thousand Austrians at Bresklitowsky, would be able to hold Tchitchakof in check, and re-establish his connexion with France. On the Emperor's arrival at Vereia, he met Mortier. He had executed his orders to blow up the Kremlin. A number of Cossacks and boors, who after his departure entered it to

plunder, perished with it. On the 23rd of October, at half-past one in the morning, the air was shook by this terrible explosion ; and both armies, though familiar to strange and appalling sounds, were awed by it. The earth trembled under Mortier's steps, as he drew off his troops. The Emperor heard it ten leagues farther off at Femenskoi, and announced the event to Europe in a tone of defiance and insult. "The Kremlin had ceased to exist ; and he had left all that remained of Moscow as a den for robbers and beggars." Mortier, by Napoleon's special directions, had brought away as many of the wounded as he could. He also brought with him a prisoner, Count Winzingerode, who had rushed into the Kremlin at the head of a band of Cossacks : and finding himself surrounded, waved his handkerchief in the air, and pretended to come as a flag of truce. As he was a German by birth Napoleon treated him harshly ; but showed considerable kindness to Count Narischkin, his aide-de-camp, who was a Russian. Berthier had written to Kutusof on the 19th to carry on hostilities on a less savage plan, and to spare the towns. His answer was, that "he could not restrain the patriotism of the Russians." From this time Napoleon retaliated, and burnt all the towns in his rear. Borowsk and Vereia were the first that shared this fate.

On the 28th, the French army re-entered Mojaisk. The town was filled with a number of wounded. They were here only three days' march from Moscow ; but Napoleon's spirits revived at finding himself on this well-known road, where in the evening he received intelligence which alarmed him, that the whole Russian army was marching by Medyn upon Wiazma. He immedately ordered his guard forward to Gjatz, to secure that point. Winter had now set in, and added to the gloom of everything around. A few leagues from Mojaisk, they had to cross the Kalouga, which is a mere brook ; but they were stopped for

want of a bridge over it, which a couple of trees and a few planks would have remedied. The Emperor shrugged his shoulders: and Berthier, whose business it was to attend to the circumstance, replied by an air of silent resignation. A little farther on, the army was marching in a profound silence, when some of the foremost raising their eyes, uttered a cry of consternation. They saw the earth trodden, the trees cut to stumps; and beyond were broken hillocks, containing the most hideous spectacles, fragments of armour and drums, with half-devoured bodies and skeletons. It was the terrible redoubt, where so many brave men had fallen. A murmur ran through the ranks: "It is the field of the great battle?" The Emperor hurried by; nobody stopped; for pressed by hunger, cold, and the enemy, they could only turn their heads to give a last glance at the unsheltered burial-place of their old companions in arms, whom they were leaving for ever. But glory and liberty, be it said, were their bedfellows; and *there* not only they, but the whole human race surrendered up their moral being and their vital breath, and can only henceforward as in a charnel-house drag out a mutilated and dishonoured existence—bodies without a living soul, the forms without the free-born spirit of men! A fit inscription for that ghastly spot would make mad the survivors, and set free the world. The army was moving on in sedate and silent meditation past this fatal field, when one of the victims of the bloody day was, it is said, perceived to be still living, and piercing the air with his cries. But this is too horrible to be believed or dwelt on. Farther on, they came to the great abbey or hospital of Kolotskoi. At Borodino, the struggle was over; here it was continued, and Death inflicted lingering tortures on his destined prey. The care of the surgeons and the love of life preserved many, who when they found the army repassing, crawled to the threshold, and held out their hands in agonizing supplication. The

Emperor gave orders that every carriage of whatever description should receive one of these unhappy sufferers, and that the weakest, as had been done at Moscow, should be left under the protection of wounded Russians, whom the French had cured. He stopped to see the order executed. The sutlers whose carts received the wounded are said to have loitered behind, and thrown them into the ditches; and on the evening of this long day's march, as the imperial column approached Gjatz, they found the road strewed with the bodies of a number of Russian prisoners, who were under the guard of some Portuguese and Poles. At this last atrocity the Emperor observed a gloomy silence, but nothing of the kind happened again.

The Emperor reached Wiazma in two days' march from Gjatz. Here he halted for the arrival of Prince Eugene and Davoust; and to reconnoitre the road from Medyn and Juknof. Hearing no tidings of the Russians, he set off after thirty-six hours' stay, leaving Ney at Wiazma to relieve Davoust, who was accused of dilatoriness; but he said that the artillery and waggons were constantly precipitated into deep-ravines which crossed the road, and that it was nearly impossible to drag them up the opposite icy slope, the horses' shoes not having been turned. Nevertheless, both he and the Viceroy arrived within two leagues of Wiazma on the 2nd of November, and might have passed through it; but neglecting to do so, the Russian advanced-guard under Miloradowich (called the Russian Murat) turned their bivouacs in the night, and posted themselves along the left of the road, between the French generals and Wiazma. On the 3rd of November, Prince Eugene was preparing to take the road to that town, when the first dawn of day showed him his situation, his rear-guard cut off, and Ney, who was to have come to his assistance, fighting in his own defence in the direction of Wiazma. He immediately took his resolution. He stopped,

faced about, formed in line along the main road, and kept the foremost of the enemy's troops in check, till Ney marched up one of his regiments, and attacking them in the rear compelled them to retire. At the same time, Compans, one of Davoust's generals, joined his division to the Italian guard ; and while they fought together, Davoust passed, and got between Wiazma and the Russians. The battle was not over, but begun. The French amounted to thirty thousand, but were in great disorder. The Russian artillery, superior in number, advanced at a gallop, and mowed down their lines. Davoust and his generals were still surrounded with many of their bravest men. Several of the officers who had been wounded at the Mosqua were still seen, one with his arm in a sling, another with his head covered with bandages, encouraging the soldiers, keeping them together, throwing themselves upon the enemy's field-pieces and seizing them, and thus preventing the effects of bad example by good. Miloradowich saw that his prey would escape him, and sent the Englishman Wilson to summon Kutusof to his aid ; but the old general laughed at him. The fight had already lasted seven hours ; when night approaching, the French began to retire. This retrograde movement encouraged the enemy ; and had it not been for a signal effort of the 25th, 57th, and 85th regiments, Davoust's corps would have been turned, broken, and destroyed. Prince Eugene made good his retreat to Wiazma ; Davoust followed, but Morand's division, which entered first, found a number of Russians there before them, and had to cut their way through them. Compans, who brought up the rear, put an end to the affair by facing about, and making a furious assault upon Miloradowich. The bivouacs were set up by the light of the burning of Wiazma, and amidst repeated discharges of artillery. During the night the alarm continued. Several times the troops thought they were attacked, and groped about for their arms. On the following morning,

when they returned to their ranks, they were astonished at the smallness of their numbers.

Nevertheless the example of the chiefs and the hope of finding rest at Smolensk kept up the men's spirits. Besides, so far they had been cheered by the sight of the sun ; but on the 6th of November the snow came on, and everything underwent a total change. The consequences were most disastrous. The troops marched on without knowing where, and without distinguishing any object ; and while they strove to force their way through the whirlwinds of sleet, the snow drifted in the cavities where they fell, and the weakest rose no more. The wind drove in their faces not only the falling snow, but that which it raised in furious eddies from the earth. The Muscovite winter attacked them in every part, penetrated through their thin dress and ragged shoes. Their wet clothes froze upon them ; this covering of ice chilled their bodies, and stiffened all their limbs. A cutting and violent wind stopped their breath or seized upon it as it was exhaled, and converted it into icicles, which hung from their beards. The unhappy men crawled on with trembling limbs and chattering teeth till the snow, collecting round their feet in hard lumps, like stones, some scattered fragment, a branch of a tree, or the body of one of their companions, made them stagger and fall. Their cries and groans were vain : soon the snow covered them, and small hillocks marked where they lay ! Such was their sepulture. The road was filled with these undulations, like a burying-place. The most intrepid or obdurate were affected : they hurried past with averted eyes. But before them, around them, all was snow : the horizon seemed one vast winding-sheet, in which nature was enveloping the whole army. The only objects which came out from the bleak expanse were a few gloomy pines skirting the plain, and adding to the horror of the scene with their funereal green and the motionless erectness of their black trunks ! Even the weapons

of the soldiers were a weight almost insupportable to their benumbed limbs. In their frequent falls they slipped out of their hands and were broken or lost in the snow. Many others had their fingers frozen on the musket they still grasped. Some broke up into parties ; others wandered on alone. If they dispersed themselves in the fields, or by the cross-paths, in search of bread or a shelter for the night, they met nothing but Cossacks and an armed population, who surrounded, wounded, and stripped them, and left them with ferocious laughter to expire naked upon the snow. Then came the night of sixteen hours. But on this universal covering of snow they knew not where to stop, where to sit, where to lie, where to find a few roots for food, or dry sticks to light their fires. At length fatigue, darkness, and repeated orders induced a pause, and they tried to establish themselves for the night ; but the storm scattered the preparations for the bivouacs, and the branches of the pines covered with ice and snow only melted away, and resisted the attempts of the soldiers to kindle them into a blaze. When at length the fire got the better, officers and soldiers gathered round it to cook their wretched meal of horseflesh and a few spoonfuls of rye mixed with snow water. Next morning, circles of stiffened corpses marked the situation of the bivouacs, and the carcases of thousands of horses were strewed round them. From this time disorder and distrust began to prevail. A few resisted the strong contagion of insubordination and despondency. These were the officers, the subalterns, and some of the soldiers, whom nothing could detach from their duty. They kept up each other's spirits by repeating the name of Smolensk, which they were approaching, and looked forward to as the end of their sufferings.

Nothing remarkable happened to the imperial column between Gjatz and Mikalewska, a village between Dorogobouje and Smolensk, except that it was found necessary to throw the spoils of Moscow into the lake of Semlewo. Cannon, Gothic armour,

the ornaments of the Kremlin, and the Cross of the Great Iwan, all sunk at once. On the 3rd and 4th of November, Napoleon had stopped at Slawkowo. On the 5th he slept at Dorogobouje. On the following day, the 6th of November, on the heights of Mikalewska, just as the snow was beginning to fall, an estafette brought the news of that strange conspiracy formed by Mallet (an obscure officer in a prison) to overturn the new government and dynasty. With half-a-dozen accomplices, and with no other means than a forged report of the death of Napoleon, he attempted with his own hand to arrest the minister, the prefect of police, and the commander of Paris, and to force them to dissolve the existing authorities and proclaim a republic. He had actually prevailed with some of these ; and his plot only miscarried, it is said, through the spirit of one of the heads of a public office, who arrested Mallet, instead of being arrested by him. Really the French are a most theatrical people,

“The rightest company  
Of players that upon the world's stage be.”—DONNE.

The distinction between words and things can hardly be said to have place in their minds. You have only to say a thing, and it is believed ; and they are ready to act upon this first impression, without inquiry or regard to consequences, as if in comparison with it “the pillar'd firmament were rottenness, and earth's base built on stubble.” What should we think of any one who should attempt to make the doors of one of the prisons of London fly open by declaring that George IV. was dead, that the Duke of Clarence had refused to succeed him, and should proceed to summon the soldiers at the Tower or the Horse-Guards, with the commander-in-chief, to dissolve the two houses of parliament, and proclaim a commonwealth ? In London, such a person would be instantly taken up as a madman : in Paris, it is still thought an even chance that Mallet's conspiracy

might have taken effect, had it gone a step further. The mere supposition of the possibility is enough. Those who sought to read in Buonaparte's countenance what he thought of this incident, sought in vain. His first and only words to Daru were, "Well; if we had stayed at Moscow?" He then retired abruptly into a palisaded house, where he gave a loose to his suppressed emotions in the presence of those most devoted to him. Some of them thought the Revolution of 1789 was beginning again: others were glad of the circumstance, thinking it would in future keep him at home. So little did they apprehend the real danger;—as if what was solid and inevitable repelled belief, and only what was most light and vain found a corresponding sympathy in their breasts!

The next day the Emperor's thoughts were called off from this subject by the arrival of one of Ney's aides-de-camp. He had instructions to give an account of disasters, of which Napoleon knew enough already from deserters who were continually passing. When, therefore, the aide-de-camp (Dalbignac) was going to speak, he interrupted him with these words, "Colonel, I don't ask you for these details!" Dalbignac was silent; he felt that under circumstances so calamitous and now irremediable, every man stood in need of his whole stock of fortitude; and that the Emperor feared the effect of complaints which could only weaken him who indulged in, and him who listened to them. He was struck with Napoleon's deportment, the same that he maintained during the whole retreat—grave, silent, resigned: it was that of a man suffering less in body than others, but much more in mind, and submitted to his destiny. Just then, General Charpentier sent him some waggons loaded with provisions from Smolensk. Bessieres wanted to take possession of them for the guard, but the Emperor sent them on immediately to the Prince of the Moskwa, saying that "thcse who fought should eat

before the rest." At the same time he begged that Ney would try to defend himself long enough to allow him some time at Smolensk, where the army would have food and rest, and might be re-organised. He did so, fighting the whole way, often with a musket in his hand which had fallen from the benumbed fingers of the soldiers; and entered the town on the 30th, together with Prince Eugene, who, taking the road by Witepsk, had narrowly escaped drowning in the waters of the Wop, and had had to skirmish all the way with a rabble of hideous Cossacks. Colonel Fezensac more particularly distinguished himself in this march.

Napoleon had reached Smolensk on the 9th, and found the place a scene of confusion. The army when they arrived at this promised termination of all their sufferings were kept for a long time outside the gates, in hopes to rally the stragglers: when they were admitted and applied for provisions, they could not obtain them, having no tickets nor any officers to answer for the regiment to which they belonged. Instead of plenty, they found famine, instead of shelter only ruins; their hope was turned to despair, and from this period may be dated the greatest excesses. When at length the provisions were given out, the soldiers refused to carry them to their regiments, darting upon the sacks, and snatching out a few handfuls of flour, which they ran to devour in a corner. It was the same with the brandy. The next day, the houses were found filled with dead bodies. The Emperor shut himself up in one of the houses of the new square, nor did he leave it till the 14th, when he continued his retreat. He had reckoned upon finding fifteen days' provisions and forage for an army of a hundred thousand men: he did not find enough for half that number, and it consisted solely of flour, rice, and brandy. There was no meat at all. He was heard furiously upbraiding one of the men

charged with provisioning the army. The commissary only saved his life by a long and abject entreaty on his knees, or perhaps by showing that in the circumstances he had done nearly all that was possible. The stragglers had consumed all they could lay hands on ; droves of cattle had died of cold on the road ; and the enemy had captured a number of convoys.

## CHAPTER XLVIII.

## RETREAT OF THE FRENCH CONTINUED.

The imperial column quits Smolensk ; Napoleon engages the Russians at Krasno ; dreadful sufferings of the army ; passage of the Berezina ; the last imperial head-quarter of Napoleon ; sets out for Paris ; Murat abandons the army ; defection of the Austrians and Prussians ; Napoleon's passage through Warsaw.

AT Smolensk Buonaparte was twelve marches from Borisof, where Wittgenstein from the north, and Tchitchakof from the south, were trying to form a junction in the neighbourhood of Minsk, so as to cut off his retreat.

After the action of the 18th of August, which procured St. Cyr the rank of marshal, that general remained on the Russian bank of the Duna, in possession of Polotsk and an intrenched camp before it. During the two following months the war had been a mere affair of outposts, but to the advantage of the Russians, and at the end of that period Wittgenstein's army amounted to fifty-two thousand men ; while the French was reduced to seventeen thousand, including the Bavarians or sixth corps. St. Cyr was fearful of being turned on his right by Wittgenstein, and on his left by Steinheil, who was advancing from Riga with two divisions of the army of Finland. St. Cyr wrote to Macdonald, urging him to stop this army, or to send him fifteen thousand men ; but Macdonald, suspecting the intention of Yorck, to deliver up his park of siege-artillery to the Russians, refused on any account to stir from his post. In this situation the Russians became more daring every

day ; and on the 17th of October, St. Cyr's advanced posts were driven in, and Wittgenstein gained possession of the outlets of the woods which surround Polotsk. On the following day, he attacked him with fury in his intrenchments : yet, after an obstinate engagement, St. Cyr, though wounded, remained master of the field. On his left a body of Swiss and Croats, who had never been in action, rushed too impetuously forward, and were in danger of being overwhelmed by numbers ; they at length, however, disentangled themselves and repulsed the enemy. Thus fourteen thousand men, according to the French accounts, resisted fifty. St. Cyr slept tranquilly, not dreaming that Steinheil had crossed the Duna at Dryssa, and was ascending the left bank of that river with thirteen thousand men to attack him in his rear. On the 19th, Wittgenstein was observed with his troops under arms, regularly drawn up for an attack, for which, however, he seemed to want resolution to give the signal. St. Cyr was at a loss to account for this backwardness, when about ten in the morning an aide-de-camp arrived at full speed from the opposite bank of the river to announce that another hostile army was advancing on that side and driving the French cavalry before it. The rumour of this conflict filled the ranks of Wittgenstein with transport, and the French camp with dismay. The cannon of Steinheil were distinctly heard. Already St. Cyr had detached three regiments to meet him, and began to point his batteries against the bridge over which he must pass : yet still Wittgenstein continued inactive. He seemed not contented with hearing Steinheil's fire, but determined to wait for his approach. His officers advised St. Cyr to an instant retreat, but he conceived that this would be only a signal for Wittgenstein to fall upon him with his whole force, and he thought it better to trust to the unaccountable torpor which had seized the Russians, and to the chapter of accidents. For three hours he

stood in the most anxious suspense with his watch in his hand marking the decline of the sun, and hoping that Polotsk might be wrapped in darkness before the arrival of his new enemy. At length, when he was within half an hour's march of the bridge where he could bar St. Cyr from the only avenue by which he could escape from Wittgenstein, he halted. A thick fog at the same time came on, and concealed the three armies from each other's view. St. Cyr instantly began to cross the river, but some of the troops setting fire to their camp, gave the alarm to Wittgenstein, and a severe conflict ensued, before the French were able to make good their retreat. Steinheil heard it not, nor did he come to the assistance of his countrymen ; and the next day, his communication with Wittgenstein having been cut off by destroying the bridge over the river, De Wrede with his Bavarians drove him several leagues into the woods from which he had issued, with the loss of a great number of his men.

St. Cyr having been wounded, it was proposed to choose another general ; and De Wrede having offered himself and been rejected, and also piqued at no mention having been made of his name in the affair of the 18th of August, withdrew in disgust, and threw himself upon Klubokoe, a line which Napoleon had abandoned, and where he was completely useless. St. Cyr continued his retreat, covering the road from Orcha to Borisof ; and on the 30th of October was joined by Victor with twenty-five thousand men at Smoliany, where Wittgenstein not knowing this increase of numbers, offered the French battle, which Victor unaccountably declined. Buonaparte was incensed when he learned this circumstance on the 6th of November (the day he heard of Mallet's conspiracy) and sent orders to him to drive Wittgenstein, who hung upon his flanks at Witepsk, behind the Duna. Baraguay d'Hilliers had been completely defeated near Elnia, and the brigade Augereau taken prisoners,

so that Kutusof might go to Krasnoe before him. He was brought before the Emperor on a charge of misconduct, and sent to Berlin, where he soon after fell a prey to chagrin. A report was also in circulation which threatened the French with the march of Tchitchakof upon Minsk, and with the defection of Schwartzenberg. The numbers of the army were daily diminishing, and its supplies cut off. Against this host of calamities Napoleon could oppose nothing but a firm countenance. He stopped five days at Smolensk, and during that time had placed the whole of the remaining cavalry under one leader, Latour-Maubourg. Eugene, Davoust, and Ney were to leave the place in succession after him. Ney was not to quit it till the 16th or 17th, when he was to destroy all the ammunition, and blow up the towers of the city walls.

At length, on the 14th of November, at four o'clock in the morning, the imperial column quitted Smolensk. Its march was still firm and decided, but silent and solemn as night. The first day they advanced five leagues to Korythnia, which Junot had passed with his corps of Westphalians, now reduced to seven hundred men. At this very time Kutusof was advancing along the Elnia and Krasnoe road, covering the whole of it with ninety thousand men, parallel to the Emperor, whom he had outstripped, and sent forward different detachments to Krasnoe, Lyadi, and Nikouline, to cut off the retreat of the French. While all these hostile troops were stationing themselves about him, Napoleon was reposing tranquilly in a wretched habitation, the only one remaining in the village of Korythnia, and appeared not to be aware of or to despise those movements of men, arms, and horses by which he was surrounded: he dispatched no orders to hasten on the other corps, and waited for daylight to begin his march himself. Shortly after a file of Cossacks drew up across the road, but they were easily dispersed; when suddenly

the fire of a battery burst from the heights on the left, and a body of horse, under Miloradovich, attacked the Westphalian corps, whose chief losing his presence of mind, they were thrown into confusion. A young officer (Excelmans) at this moment stepped forward, and by his voice, hand and eye, encouraged the men and restored order. Junot died soon after the termination of the campaign, it is supposed of the severe wounds he had received, and of the excesses in which he indulged. The enemy observing this head of column march in good order, did not choose to attack it otherwise than by bullets. When the grenadiers of the old guard came to pass across this fire, they closed around Napoleon like a living fortress, proud of their privilege of protecting his person. The band played the air, *Ou peut-on être mieux qu'au sein de sa famille?*\* But the Emperor, whom nothing escaped, said, "Rather play, *Veillons au salut de l'Empire!*"† Two hours after, he entered Krasnoe in some anxiety, not knowing whom he might have to encounter there; but Sebastiani and the foremost grenadiers had already driven out the enemy. He left Mortier and the young guard half a league behind him, holding out a feeble hand to those who came after. Miloradovich contented himself with insulting the passage of the Emperor and the old guard. He did not descend from the heights till it had passed, and then threw himself across the high road with twenty thousand men, thus separating Eugene, Davoust, and Ney from the Emperor, and barring the road to Europe against them.

Meanwhile, Eugene was exerting himself to unite his scattered troops, and did not succeed in rallying eight thousand men before the 15th of November was far advanced. He was overtaken by night, three leagues from Smolensk; and the next day, he and the chief of his staff, absorbed in melancholy reflec-

\* "Where can one be better than in the bosom of one's family?"

† "Let us watch over the safety of the empire."

tions, had suffered their horses to proceed unchecked, when a halt being made by the stragglers in front, he looked round, and discovered that he had advanced a full hour's march before his corps, that he was surrounded by only about fifteen hundred of his own men, of all ranks and nations, without leaders or order, and that he was summoned by the enemy to surrender. Guyon, a general, all whose men were dead or dispersed, started forward, and said to the messenger, "Tell your commander that if he has twenty thousand men, we have eighty thousand!" The Russian withdrew in amazement, and the firing commenced. Prince Eugene was at a loss for a moment; but hastened back to bring up his division to force a passage before it was yet too late. Guilleminot in his absence called the officers together, and they formed the disorderly mass about them into three platoons, who by presenting a firm attitude, and armed only with muskets, kept ten times the number of Russians at bay for more than an hour. Then hearing cannon in the direction of Krasnoe, and their patience being exhausted, they determined to cut their way through this body of Russians, which they did in spite of calls to lay down their arms, and tremendous discharges of artillery, losing half their numbers: the rest rejoined the Viceroy, who was coming towards them. Miloradowich now attacked the main body of the French and Italians, amounting to about five or six thousand. The combatants were drawn up on each side of the road, and in the plain the battle was nearly equal; but a battery on some heights to the left did dreadful execution among the Viceroy's troops, and he asked three hundred volunteers to scale it. They were very nearly cut in pieces. Yet the mere audacity of the act staggered the Russians, who remained with victory in their hands, but without daring to use it till night, when Prince Eugene leaving fires behind him, withdrew across the fields, and had reached

Krasnoe, while Miloradowich was perhaps still dreaming of the Emperor's son-in-law delivering up his sword to him. They were nearly stopped at one time by a sentinel, but Kilsby, a Pole, stepping forward, said in Russian, "Hist, fool! do you not perceive we are a party of Ouwarof's, sent on a secret expedition?" and the sentinel mistaking them for his countrymen, let them pass without giving the alarm.

The Emperor on his part had been expecting the Viceroy the whole of the preceding day. "Eugene and the army of Italy, and the long day of expectation every moment disappointed, was it all over with them at last?" One only hope remained; that the Viceroy driven back upon Smolensk had been joined by Davoust and Ney, and that the three would appear together. In the anxiety that harassed him he called a council of the marshals that were with him, Berthier, Bessieres, Mortier, and Lefebvre; and the result was to re-enter Russia, to extricate their old companions in arms or perish with them. His resolution once formed, the great and important movements carrying on around him never once shook it. He knew that Kutusof was close at hand, and that Ojarowski with an advanced-guard of Russian infantry had already got before him, and was waiting for him in a village in the rear of his left. Misfortunes rather irritating than depressing him, he called for Rapp, and told him, that "it was absolutely necessary for him to depart instantly, and hasten through the darkness to attack that infantry with the bayonet; that this was the first time they had displayed such audacity, and that he was determined to make them so completely repent of it that they should never come so near his head-quarters again." Then calling back his aide-de-camp, "But no!" he resumed, "let Roguet and his division go alone! Do you stay here. I would not have you killed: I shall want you at Dantzic." Rapp, while carrying this order to Roguet, could not sufficiently restrain his astonishment that

his chief, surrounded as he was by eighty thousand enemies whom he was going to attack on the morrow with nine thousand men, should feel such perfect confidence in his safety as to concern himself about what he should have to do at Dantzic, a city from which he was separated by the severities of winter, two hostile armies, famine, and a distance of a hundred and eighty leagues.

The night attack at Chirkowa and Maliewo was perfectly successful. Roguet's men approached with bayonets fixed and without firing ; and such was the surprise and disorder of the Russians that they had barely time to escape and throw their arms into a neighbouring lake. This encounter stopped the movement of the Russians for twenty-four hours, and allowed the Emperor to remain at Krasnoe, and Prince Eugene to rejoin him there the ensuing night. He received him with the utmost joy, but soon after fell into greater anxiety than ever about the fate of Ney and Davoust. Napoleon was fully apprised of the imminence of his danger. He had it in his power to withdraw from it. Daylight had not yet arrived. He might, if he judged it right to do so, avoid this bloody conflict, and move rapidly forward with Eugene and the guard to Orcha and Borisof. There he could immediately rally around him the thirty thousand French troops under Victor and Oudinot, those with Dombrowski, with Regnier and Schwartzenberg, and at all his dépôts, and would in the following year be again able to show an army of a truly formidable description.

On the 17th, before day, he dispatched his orders, armed himself, went out on foot ; and, at the head of his old guard, put them in motion. But it was not towards Poland, his ally, that he directed his steps, nor towards his beloved France, where he might once more find himself the head of a rising dynasty, and the Emperor of the West. Grasping his sword, he exclaimed, " I have acted the Emperor long enough ;

it is time for me to act the general." He was in fact marching back to oppose a host of eighty thousand enemies, to draw all their efforts upon himself, and divert them from Ney and Davoust. The day broke, disclosing on one side the Russian battalions and batteries, which in front, on the right, and in the rear, lined the horizon ; and on the other side, Napoleon with his six thousand guards, proceeding with a firm step to station himself within that formidable circle, with Mortier and five thousand more a few paces in advance of him. Their object was to defend the right flank of the high road from Krasnoe, as far as the great ravine in the direction of Stachowa. A battalion of chasseurs of the old guard, drawn up in a square like a brazen fort before the high road, served as a support to the left of the young soldiers. To the right, on the snowy plain surrounding Krasnoe, were the remaining cavalry of the guard, a few cannon, and the horse of Latour-Maubourg. The artillery of the Duke of Treviso was reinforced by a battery commanded by Drouot, one of those men who live for virtue. Claparde remained with his few soldiers to protect the wounded and the baggage in Krasnoe. The Viceroy with his shattered troops continued his retreat on Lyadi. Roguet had been recalled from Maliewo, and the enemy were pushing some columns through the village, and extending themselves more and more to the right, with a view to surround their adversaries. The battle then began, if it could be called one. But here also was furnished a decisive proof that renown is not a worthless shadow, but a real and substantial power. The Russians had nothing to do but to march forward ; their number alone would have been sufficient to crush Napoleon and his diminished force. But they did not venture to come in contact with him. The very sight of the conqueror in so many fields of battle struck them with awe and terror. The Pyramids, Marengo, Austerlitz, Friedland, an army of victories, seemed to rise up for his

defence and assistance, and to interpose, as with some over-mastering spell, between him and this immense body of Russians. It was scarcely possible not to believe that in the eyes of a people so subjected and superstitious his extraordinary renown excited an apprehension of something preternatural ; which they conceived beyond their reach and annoyance, and which they ought to attack at a secure distance ; in short, that against the old guard, that living fortress, that column of granite, as its chief had designated it, men were powerless, and that artillery alone could possibly demolish it.

They effected wide and deep breaches in the ranks of Roguet and the young guard ; but they killed without conquering. These new soldiers, one-half of whom had never been before in battle, stood this deadly fire for the space of three hours without retreating a single step to avoid it, and without being able to return it, having no cannon, and the Russians keeping out of the reach of their small arms. But every moment the danger grew greater. The report of cannon and a message from Claparede announced that Beningsen was on the road from Lyadi. The fire of the enemy flashed in the east, the south, and the west. The French had no retreat but the north and the Dnieper, near which were the high road and the Emperor. The Russians were thought to be covering an eminence just over his head with cannon. He was informed of the circumstance, and glancing his eye towards the spot, merely said, " Well then, let a battalion of my chasseurs carry it !" Then without paying any farther attention to the matter, his looks and concern reverted exclusively to the danger of Mortier. Just at this moment, Davoust made his appearance through a cloud of Cossacks, whom he was scattering before him. The first corps was now saved ; but information arrived at the same time, that the rear-guard could no longer defend Krasnoe, and that all hope of saving Ney must be given up. Napoleon

could not for some time make up his mind to so great a sacrifice ; but seeing no remedy, and that all must otherwise be lost, he sent for Mortier, and grasping his hand in the utmost distress, said that “the enemy were assailing him, that Kutusof might cut him off from Lyadi and the last bend of the Boristhenes, that he would proceed thither with all speed with the old guard to secure the passage, that Mortier and Davoust must keep possession of Krasnoe till night, and then follow him.” He then moved slowly from the field of battle, passed through Krasnoe, where he again halted, and afterwards made his way to Lyadi.

Mortier obeyed his instructions, and kept his ground for some time, by the most desperate valour, and at last led off his three thousand men (which were all he had remaining) in the face of fifty thousand, at the usual marching step. “Do you hear, soldiers,” said General Laborde, “the marshal orders the ordinary time? The ordinary time, soldiers!” Among the accidents of this march, a shell from an adjoining height entered the body of a horse and burst there, blowing the horse to pieces without hurting the rider, who fell upon his feet and proceeded on. When night came, Napoleon found that Mortier had got before him on the road. He sent for, and gently reproached him, saying, “he had doubtless fought gloriously ; but why had he placed his Emperor between himself and the enemy ; thus exposing him to be made a prisoner?” The next day the march was continued. The impatient stragglers went before, and all of them passed Napoleon, who was on foot, with his *bâton* in his hand, proceeding with difficulty and reluctance, and halting every quarter of an hour, as if he could scarcely tear himself away from Old Russia, the frontier of which he had just passed at Lyadi, and in which he had left his unfortunate companion in arms. In the evening they reached Dom-browna, a town with inhabitants in it (an extraordinary sight), and those inhabitants friendly to them,

The weather was also grown milder: but it was now too late. The army was destroyed. Here news was brought that Tchitchakof had entered Minsk on the 17th. Napoleon was at first speechless, as if he had received a mortal blow; then rousing himself with the urgency of the danger, he coolly remarked, "Well, we have nothing to do now but to make our way with the bayonet." He then sent off orders to Dombrowski and the Duke of Reggio to hasten the passage of the Berezina at Borisof, and to the Duke of Belluno to cover his march on the right. During the night there was an alarm of Cossacks in the camp; and the panic extended to the guard, and awoke Napoleon. He addressed them very seriously upon it. There was a peculiar feeling with regard to these hordes of half savages; not exactly fear, but a mixture of aversion and contempt, like the disgust that is felt for some unclean animal. Advantage was taken of this circumstance by the most skilful among the marauders, who had only to cry "The Cossacks are coming," to have all the booty left to themselves. At Orcha were found provisions in great abundance; and here once more the gens-d'armes made their appearance, who at first attempted to repress disorder, but soon found their occupation gone. Napoleon entered Orcha with six thousand men, Eugene with eighteen hundred, Davoust with four thousand. The marshal himself had lost everything; was without linen; and emaciated with famine. He declared that none but men of steel could go through such trials. But the firmness of Napoleon appeared to increase with his danger. In his estimation, and in the midst even of the wildest waste of swamp or ice, this handful of men was always the grand army, and himself the conqueror of Europe. Nor was any rashness or blind infatuation mixed up with this feeling, as was evident from his burning in this very town, and with his own hands, all those of his effects which might serve as trophies, should he fall into the power of the enemy;

and among other things, the papers which he had collected as materials for writing his own life.

Buonaparte wished to have attacked Wittgenstein, but he was dissuaded from this project. He then decided for Borisof; but he was slow in quitting the Boristhenes. His regrets still clung to Ney, as did those of the whole army. After Napoleon had left Orcha on the 20th, they accused each other of having deserted him. They asked questions of those who had last seen him; and when all their conjectures were exhausted, and they were on the point of giving up all hope, on a sudden they heard the trampling of horses, and the joyful exclamation, "Marhal Ney is saved; he will be here in a moment's time, here are the Polish horsemen come to announce his arrival!" He was approaching along the right bank of the Boristhenes, and applied for assistance. Eugene went to give it him; and when they met, the troops of the latter overwhelmed those of Ney with congratulations and anxious inquiries. They replied that they had set out from Smolensk on the 17th, with twelve pieces of cannon, six thousand bayonets, and three hundred horse, leaving their sick to the enemy's mercy. At the gates of the city an act of infamy had struck them with horror. A woman had left her child to perish in the snow, saying, he had never seen France, and would not miss it; and persisted in doing so, till the soldiers, enraged at her depravity, left her to the fate she had designed for her offspring. When near Korythnia, the report of cannon and bullets whizzing over their heads made them believe that an engagement was near; when going to learn the cause, they found only two French batteries which had been left behind, and some wretched Cossacks galloping off through the fields at full speed, scared at their own temerity in discharging the guns, and at the noise they made. Hitherto they had seen only the traces of a disastrous rout—fragments of armour, scattered garments, carriages and cannon sticking in the hollows,

and the horses fastened to them still struggling or dead and half-devoured. But now they came to a field covered with blood and with the slain, where they found, by the buttons, that the 64th division of the Italian guard had been engaged here just before ; but they could not learn from the silence of death, or the desolate scene around, what had become of the survivors. They hastened by, and through a hollow defile emerged into a spacious plain. They knew it for the same, where three months before they had defeated Newerowski, and saluted Napoleon on his birthday, with the cannon taken from the Russians. The soldiers of Mortier then said that it was also the same spot where the Emperor and themselves had fought, and waited for them on the 17th. Ney's men rejoined, that here they still found Kutusof, or rather Miloradowich, for the old Russian had not yet stirred from Dobroe. Those in advance pointed to the plains of snow, or the rising grounds on the left frowning with the enemy's forces. An officer came to summon them to surrender ; but Ney having answered that a Marshal of France never surrendered, at once those cold and silent hills were converted into so many volcanos belching fire. In the midst of all these explosions, the French general, unmoved, unhurt, everywhere present, seemed to be in his own peculiar element. He launched Ricard with fifteen hundred men against the hostile army, ordered four hundred Illyrians to assail their left, and himself with three thousand men mounted to the assault in front. He was repulsed and hurled back into a ravine ; but regaining the summit, he there rallied and waited for the enemy who did not dare to follow him. Winter brought night to his assistance. He then gave the signal to his troops to retire, as if returning to Smolensk ; but coming to a stream, and breaking the ice to see which way the current ran, he exclaimed with true military instinct, "This stream flows into the Dnieper ! This is our guide !" And following its

course, reached the Dnieper at about a league's distance. A lame peasant whom they met showed them where they could best pass; but the ice would bear only one at a time, and Ney slept on the bank, wrapped in his cloak, for three hours that it took his army to assemble and gain the other side. They next attempted to get over the carriages with the sick and wounded, but in vain. One officer, of the name of Brigueville floated over on a piece of ice, and was rescued by Ney himself. They now marched forward, scarcely knowing whither; following a route, where stooping down in the dark, they perceived that an army had just passed before them, but it brought them to a village, where they found provisions, repose, shelter, and a hundred Cossacks, whom they took prisoners. For three days they then pursued their perilous way, beset by Platof and his flying hordes, narrowly escaping Kutusof's army, availing themselves of night, the woods, and the river to cover their retreat, till they arrived near enough to Orcha to dispatch Pchebendowski and fifty Poles for succour. During the whole time, they remained calm, collected, cheerful, and seemed amidst so many prodigies of bravery and of skill to have done nothing extraordinary. Each of the few last days had had its distinguished men; Eugene on the 14th, Mortier on the 17th, but now all agreed to proclaim Ney the true hero of the retreat. When Napoleon, who was two leagues distant, was apprised that Ney had come back, he absolutely leaped and shouted for joy: he exclaimed, in a tone of transport, "I have saved my eagles then! To redeem such a man as that from destruction, I would have given three hundred millions out of my treasury!" This magnanimity is the highest of all; for there is no effort that costs so much as to rejoice at the good fortune of others. They who do not respect the brave are not brave themselves.

Napoleon, even after the capture of Minsk, was not prepared to hear of the taking of Borisof on the 21st.

It was on the morning after this fatal event, at three days' march from Borisof, and on the main road, that an officer met Napoleon with the disastrous news. The Emperor, striking the earth with his staff, raised his eyes with an expression of impatience towards heaven, and exclaimed, "It is then written there, that henceforth every step shall be a fault!" Napoleon was now at Toloczina: he had the position of Borisof explained to him. The Berezina was there eighteen hundred feet wide, and the bridge over it totally destroyed. He then pointed with his finger on the map to a point below Borisof, where he wished to pass: but the presence of Tchitchakof on the right bank was made an objection. Then going lower still, and seeing that he was approaching the country of the Cossacks, he stopped short, and exclaimed, "Ah, yes, Pultowa! Like Charles XII!" And then added, "Thus it is, when one heaps faults upon faults!" These bursts of passion were short and rare, and did not alter his general demeanour. Berthier, Duroc, Daru declared that "to them he appeared immovable:" and so he was, compared with the rest of mankind. A conversation that passed that night will show the critical situation in which he was placed; and probably gave the first idea of his separation from the army. The night was far advanced, and Napoleon had retired to rest; Duroc and Daru stayed in his chamber, and believing their chief to be asleep, gave vent in a low voice to the most gloomy forebodings. He heard them, however, and the words, "Prisoner of state," striking his ear. "What!" said he, "do you suppose they would dare?" Daru was taken by surprise, but recovering himself, he replied, "That if they were forced to surrender, they must expect the worst, and could have little dependence on the generosity of the enemy." "But France," replied the Emperor, "what will she say?" "As for France," continued Daru, "we might make a thousand distressing conjectures; but we can

none of us tell what would happen there." He then added, that "for the principal officers as well as the Emperor himself, it would be well if through the air or any other medium, since the passage of the earth seemed shut against them, the Emperor could reach France, where he could save them much more certainly than he could by remaining with them." "I only embarrass you then," replied the Emperor, smiling, "Yes, sire." He continued silent some time, when he asked, "If all the reports of the ministers were destroyed?" He was answered in the negative. "Well," he replied, "go and destroy them; for it must be acknowledged we are in a calamitous situation." With this confession on his lips he fell asleep, having the power, when necessary, of deferring everything to the morrow.

On the 24th, he learnt that the only point at which he could attempt the passage of the Berezina was in the neighbourhood of Studzianka, a little to the right of Borizof, where the river was three hundred and twenty-four feet wide, and six feet deep, and the landing-place on the other side in a marsh, under the fire of a commanding position strongly occupied by the enemy. Napoleon prepared for this as for a desperate undertaking: but there was no resource. His first step was to collect all the eagles and have them burnt. He formed eighteen hundred of his dismounted guard into two battalions, assembled around him a troop of five hundred gentlemen, consisting of the officers of Latour-Maubourg's cavalry, who were still mounted; and had all the useless carriages burnt. He then plunged into the dark and boundless forest of Minsk, in which a few spots had been cleared for small villages and miserable habitations. It resounded with the report of Wittgenstein's artillery, who came down from the north accompanied by winter (which seemed along with Kutusof to have quitted the French) upon the flank of their feeble expiring column. This threatening sound hastened their

steps. Forty or fifty thousand men, women, and children passed through the wood as fast as their weakness and the slipperiness of the ground would permit. As they approached Borizof, loud shouts were heard before them. Some ran forward, believing they were about to be attacked. It was the army of Victor, which had been tardily pursued by Wittgenstein to the edge of the forest. They were waiting for Napoleon. They were still unbroken in numbers and in spirit, and at the sight of their Emperor burst forth into the customary acclamations. They were ignorant of his disasters, which had been concealed as much as possible even from their leaders. When instead of the formidable column which was about to achieve the conquest of Moscow, they beheld behind Napoleon only a band of spectres covered with rags, women's pelisses, bits of carpet, or with dirty cloaks scorched by the fire of the bivouacs, and with feet wrapped in the most wretched tatters, they were struck with consternation. They looked with affright upon the miserable and emaciated soldiers, whose harassed and squalid faces were deformed with hideous beards, marching without arms and without order, hanging their heads and fixing their eyes on the earth in silence like a troop of captives. Nor were they less astonished at the sight of so many straggling field-officers, occupied only in securing the remnant of their property or providing for their safety, and mixing indiscriminately with the soldiers, who seemed not to regard them. The soldiers of Victor and of Oudinot could not believe their eyes, and shed tears over those of their comrades whom they recognised in the crowd, and with whom they shared their food and clothing. They asked "where was the main body of the army?" And this small band collected round their chief being pointed out to them, their eyes still wandered in search of the remainder.

And yet the unarmed, the dying even, though they knew that they must make their way across a river and in the face of a new enemy, doubted not of

victory. It was indeed but the shadow of an army, but it was the shadow of the grand army. It felt itself conquered by nature alone. The sight of their Emperor sustained their courage. They had long been accustomed to look to him not merely for life but for victory. This was their first unfortunate campaign, out of so many that had been fortunate. All that was wanted was strength to follow him: he alone who had raised his soldiers to such a height and precipitated them so low could save them. And thus, surrounded by men who might have reproached him with their sufferings, he marched without fear: speaking to them all without restraint or affectation, in full confidence that their respect for him would endure as long as their respect for glory. He knew well that he belonged to them as much as they belonged to him; and that his renown was the property of the nation. Every man would rather have turned his arms against himself (which indeed many did) than against their leader: it was the less suicide of the two. Some crawled to fall and die at his feet, and even in the ravings of delirium, they implored but never reproached him. In fact, did he not take part in the common danger? Who had lost so much as he? If there were any murmurs, they were not heard when he was present. Of all their misfortunes, the greatest was that of displeasing him; so rooted was their trust in and their submission to the man who had made the world submit to them, and whose genius, till now always triumphant, always infallible, had taken the place of their own free-will!

The French were now approaching the most critical part of the retreat. Victor was in the rear with fifteen thousand men; Oudinot in advance, and already on the Berezina with five thousand; the Emperor midway between them with seven thousand effective men, forty thousand stragglers, and an enormous mass of baggage and artillery, chiefly belonging to the second and ninth corps, that had lately come up. On the 25th, as he was on the point of reaching the

Berezina, he stopped on the high road every moment, waiting for night to conceal his arrival from the enemy, and to give time to the Duke of Reggio to evacuate Borisof. He had resolved to pass at Studzianka. The spot had been pointed out by Corbineau, an officer of Oudinot's, who having been repulsed by Tchitchakof as he was trying to reach Borisof from Smoliany, and forced to make a retrograde movement along the Berezina, could not discover any place at which to pass the river, when he perceived a Lithuanian peasant, whose horse being still wet appeared to have just come out of it, and who showed him the way across, immediately opposite Studzianka. Oudinot, who had been apprised of the circumstance, conceived that this would be the best way for the army to pass; and even if the bridges should fail, the Emperor and cavalry could cross the ford, by which means all would not be lost in peace as well as war, as would be the case if Napoleon were left in the power of the enemy. Accordingly, from the night of the 23rd, the general of artillery, a company of pontoon-men, a regiment of infantry, and Corbineau's brigade occupied Studzianka. At the same time, two other passages above and below Borisof were reconnoitred: all of them were closely watched. The question was, how to deceive and dislodge the enemy; and as nothing could be done by force, stratagem was resorted to. Three hundred men and a number of stragglers were sent on the 24th towards Oukoholda, two miles below the town, with instructions to collect, with as much noise as possible, all the materials necessary for constructing a bridge. The division of cuirassiers also filed off with great parade in the same direction, in sight of the enemy. Besides this, Lorence, general-in-chief of the *etat-major*, ordered several Jews to be brought before him, interrogated them with affected ignorance about the ford, seemed perfectly satisfied from their answers, that there was no other; and to make sure that these men would

betray him, made them swear to meet him again on the other side of the Berezina, and inform him of the movements of the enemy.

While Tchitchakof's whole attention was thus drawn to the left, preparations were secretly made for crossing the river at Studzianka. Eblé did not arrive till five in the evening of the 24th, when the piles that had been formed the preceding evening of the beams of the Polish huts were found too weak. It was necessary to begin the work again. It now became impossible to finish the bridge during the night. It could only be completed during the day of the 25th, and under the enemy's fire. But there was no time for hesitation. As soon as this decisive night closed in, Oudinot resigned to Napoleon the occupation of Borisof, and took up his position with the rest of his corps at Studzianka. They marched in perfect darkness, and in profound silence. At eight o'clock, Oudinot and Dombrowski took possession of the heights which commanded the passage ; at the same time that Eblé posted himself on the edge of the river, with his workmen and a *caisson* full of loose iron from the wheels of empty carriages, out of which with great risk and difficulty they had forged cramp irons. They had sacrificed everything to preserve this apparently trifling resource. It saved the army. At the close of the evening of the 25th, he drove the first pile into the muddy bed of the river. The French worked all night, up to their necks in water, and struggling with the pieces of ice that the stream carried down, by the light of the enemy's fires which gleamed from the heights on the other side of the river, and within range of the guns and even the musketry of Tchaplitz's division, who sent to inform his general-in-chief of what was going on.

The presence of a division of the enemy took away all hope of deceiving the Russian admiral. Every moment they expected to hear all his artillery.

open upon the French artificers ; or even should they remain undiscovered till daylight, the work would not be sufficiently advanced to be of use ; and the passage was too much exposed to be forced. Napoleon therefore set out from Borisof at ten o'clock at night, in the full expectation of encountering some desperate accident. He established himself with his six thousand and four hundred guards at Staroi-Borisof, in a house belonging to Prince Radziwil, on the right of the road from Borisof to Studzianka, and at an equal distance from these two places. He passed the remainder of the night without retiring to rest, going out every moment to listen or to inspect the passage where his fate was to be decided. The darkness was scarcely dissipated, when he joined Oudinot. The presence of danger calmed him, as it always did. But at the sight of the Russian fires which marked their position, his most determined generals, such as Rapp, Mortier, and Ney, declared that if the Emperor escaped now, they must indeed believe in his presiding star. Even Murat confessed that it was time to relinquish all thoughts but of saving the Emperor, the means of which were tendered by some brave and devoted Poles, who had offered themselves as his guides, and had pledged themselves for his safety. Napoleon however rejected this suggestion as a proposal for a shameful and cowardly flight, and would not hear of deserting his army in the midst of danger.

Day now dawned, and the Russian fires gradually grew paler, and at length disappeared. The French troops took their arms ; the artillerymen ranged themselves at their guns, the generals watched the enemy's movements—all stood in the silence of intense expectation and impending danger with their eyes riveted on the opposite bank. From the preceding evening, every stroke of the pontoon-men, resounding along the woody heights, must have drawn the attention of the enemy. The dawn of the 26th exhibited his battalions and artillery confronting the

weak scaffolding, which Eblé still wanted eight hours to complete. The French had no doubt that they waited only for day to direct their fire with greater certainty. It appeared: they saw the fires abandoned, the bank deserted, and on the heights thirty pieces of artillery in retreat. A long column was filing off towards Borisof without looking behind them; while a horde of Cossacks was seen hovering on the skirts of the wood, leaving a free passage to the French. The latter scarcely dared to believe their eyes. But at length, they clapped their hands and shouted for joy. Rapp and Oudinot hastily entered the apartment of the Emperor: "Sire," they exclaimed, "the enemy has raised his camp and abandoned his position!" "It is impossible," replied the Emperor: the news was soon confirmed by Ney and Murat. Napoleon darted from his head-quarters; he looked and saw the last files of Tchaplitz's column retire and disappear in the wood. In a transport of joy, he exclaimed, "I have deceived the Admiral!"

At this moment, two of the enemy's field-pieces returned and fired. Only a single shot was fired in answer for fear of calling back Tchaplitz, as the bridge was scarcely half-finished. But the Emperor impatient to be on the other side of the river, pointed it out to the bravest of his officers. Jacqueminot, aide-de-camp to the Duke of Reggio, and the Lithuanian count, Predzieczki, rushed foremost into the water; and in spite of the ice which cut the chests and flanks of their horses, they gained the opposite bank. They were followed by Sourd, chief of a squadron of horse, and fifty chasseurs of the 7th carrying some light infantry behind them, and by two slight rafts, which transported four hundred men, making the passage twenty times. In about an hour the bank was cleared of the Cossacks, and the bridge for the infantry finished; Legrand's division crossed it rapidly with its artillery amid shouts of "*Vive l'Empereur*" and under the

eye of their leader, who himself assisted in the passage of the artillery. On reaching the opposite shore, he cried out, "My star then still reigns!" for he was willing to indulge in the belief in fatality common to all conquerors, who finding their schemes succeed fancy they are registered in heaven, and that their will, seconded by causes for which they know not how to account and out of the reach of mortals to control, is fate.\*

At this juncture a Lithuanian nobleman, disguised as a peasant, arrived at Wilna with the intelligence of Schwartzenberg's victory over Sacken. Napoleon loudly proclaimed this success, adding that "Schwartzenberg had returned instantly on Tchitehakof's traces, and was hastening to their assistance:"—a supposition which the disappearance of Tchaplitz rendered not improbable. But the fact was that the admiral, deceived by the false demonstrations of Oudinot towards Ucholoda, and in all likelihood by the report of the Jews, had resolved to descend the Berezina at the same moment that Napoleon was ascending it, and recalled all the troops he had stationed above Borizof. Having fallen into so serious an error, he was slow in retracting it, and spent the whole of the two next days in reconnoitring, in feeling his way, and as it were in trying to avoid the acknowledgment of his mistake. While Tchitchakof was thus thrown upon a false scent, Napoleon with about six thousand of the guards and the remains of Ney's corps, passed the Berezina about two o'clock in the afternoon of the 26th, and posted himself in Oudinot's reserve, while Victor took up the position the guards had quitted on the heights of Studzianka. Tchaplitz returned on the 27th to attack Oudinot and Dombrowski on the side of Stachowa; Wittgenstein advanced from Borisof against Victor; and the battle raged for two days on both sides of the river, while the stragglers,

\* It will be seen hereafter that his understanding was not the dupe of this flattering and politic illusion.

the baggage, the wounded, and the women were struggling to pass a second bridge that had been constructed for artillery a little higher : but which breaking down in the middle drove the tide of misery and frantic distress back upon the first. The scene that followed, the pity, the terror, the anguish and the despair were such as beggar description and might serve to make fiends shudder and kings smile ! Night brought no relief. The dark mass of men, of horses and carriages directed the enemy's fire : Victor's troops, which passed at nine in the evening, crushed and overthrew all in their way ; yet the multitude stupified or desperate refused to stir, and in the morning of the 29th, when Eblé set fire to the bridge to prevent the Russians passing it, thousands were seen wandering in desolate groups on the enemy's bank : some threw themselves into the river, others rushed upon the flames of the bridge, which gave way under them, encountering both sorts of death at once, and their bodies floated down the stream, jostling against the loose fragments of ice that accompanied their progress.

The catastrophe being over, the remains of the army that were collected on the right bank, formed only a shapeless mass which rolled confusedly off towards Zembin. The whole of the surrounding country is a vast morass. The army traversed this dreary tract by means of three successive bridges, each eighteen hundred feet in length, with an amazement blended with both joy and fear. Tchaplitz had occupied them for several days, and heaps of faggots of a combustible kind of wood were lying at the entrance to them. A spark from the pipe of one of his Cossacks would have sufficed. Then all the exertions of the French, all their sufferings in crossing the Berezina, would have been fruitless. Entangled between these marshes and the river, pent up in a narrow space, without provisions, without shelter, the army and its leader must have yielded without a struggle. It was there-

fore by miracle that they escaped. Up to the last moment Napoleon had stayed on these dismal banks, near the ruins of Brilowa, without covering, and at the head of his guard. During the day they remained under arms and in order of battle: at night they bivouacked in square around their chief, and these old grenadiers were incessantly employed in keeping up their fires, which a violent wind blew out. They were seen sitting on their knapsacks, with their elbows on their knees and their heads on their hands, dozing, thus doubled together that their limbs might impart some warmth to each other, and that they might be less tormented by the gnawing emptiness of their stomachs. During these three days and three nights, the Emperor, whose eye and whose thoughts seemed to wander from the midst of the faithful band in several directions at once, supported the second corps by his presence and by his orders, defended the ninth and the passage across the river by his artillery, and united his exertions to those of Eblé in saving as much as possible from the general wreck. Lastly, he directed the march of the remnant of his army in person towards Zembin, whither Prince Eugene had preceded him. It was observed that he ordered his marshals, who had now lost most of their men, to take up positions on the road, just as if they still had armies under their command. One of them made some bitter complaints to him on the subject, and began to enumerate his losses, when Napoleon hastily interrupted him with these words, "Why do you try to rob me of my serenity?" And when the marshal persisted, he stopped his mouth, repeating in a tone of reproach, "I beg to know, sir, why you try to rob me of my serenity?"—an expression which showed the sort of deportment he wished to maintain in his adversity, and that which he required from others.

During these dreadful days, every bivouac around him was marked by its circle of dead. There were promiscuously assembled men of all nations, ranks,

and ages ; ministers, generals, commissaries. One most remarkable figure in the group was an old nobleman, a relic of the gay and brilliant days of the French court. As soon as day broke, this general officer of sixty was seen sitting on the snow-covered trunk of a tree, employed with unalterable gaiety upon the details of his toilet. In the midst of the hurricane he dressed and powdered his head with the greatest care, as if in mockery of the miseries and the adverse elements which assailed him. Near him, the scientific men, almost cut in pieces by the north wind, were engaged in inquiries into the causes of its direction.

On the 29th, the Emperor left the banks of the Berezina, driving before him the crowd of disbanded men, and marching with the ninth corps. In this way he reached Kamen, where he slept, together with the prisoners taken the preceding day, who were folded like cattle. On the 30th he reached Pleszczentczy, where the Duke of Reggio, who had been sent on with a few men, was attacked by Landskoi and his Russians, whom he repulsed. He was wounded when the Westphalians who preceded the Emperor came to his relief. On the 3rd of December, Napoleon arrived at Maladeczno in the morning. This was the last point at which Tchitchakof might have intercepted him. Some provisions were found at this place, forage was abundant, the day fine, and the cold supportable. And at length, after having been a long time without the appearance of any courier, they all met here at once. The Poles were immediately ordered upon Warsaw by way of Olita, and the dismounted cavalry on the Niemen by way of Merecz. Up to this moment, Napoleon had never seemed to conceive the idea of quitting his army. But about the middle of this day, he suddenly announced to Daru and Duroc his determination to set out immediately for Paris. Daru now saw no reason for his departure ; but his resolution was fixed. He said he had to pass through

four hundred leagues of doubtful friends or secret enemies ; and to do this with safety, he must do it at once, before his intention was known, or they had time to take their measures. The difficulty was, whether to leave Murat or Eugene behind in command of the army, but he decided for Murat as the most showy character. He did not take Berthier with him, in spite of his earnest entreaties. Caulaincourt received orders to make secret preparations for his departure. The place indicated was Smorgony ; the time, the night of the 5th of December.

Ney arrived with the rear-guard from Zembin on the 5th of December, fighting all the way with Tchaplitz's troops, who followed him across the marshes of the Berezina. They expected to be joined by Victor, but he had gone forward in the track of the Emperor. At Maladeczno dispatches arrived, in which Victor was charged to support the retreat and Ney ordered on to Smorgony. Napoleon had just reached that place, his last Imperial headquarters : he completed his last instructions and revised the 29th and last bulletin of his shattered army. Precautions were taken that nothing should transpire till the morrow. At length, night came, and with it the moment the Emperor had fixed for declaring his resolution to the leaders of the army. All the marshals were summoned. As they entered one by one, he took them apart, and gained them over to his project, either by arguments or by address. His manner was engaging and affectionate to all ; but he was more particularly attentive to Davoust, between whom and himself there had been some coolness. Then having seated them all at his table, he praised them for their noble deeds of arms. When the repast was ended, he desired Prince Eugene to read them his 29th bulletin : after which, declaring aloud what he had told each of them in private, he said, that "this very night he was going to set out with Duroc, Caulaincourt, and Lobau for Paris. That his

presence there was indispensable to France, as well as to the remnant of his unfortunate army. There only could he control the Austrians and Prussians. Those nations would doubtless hesitate to declare war upon him, when they knew him to be at the head of the French nation, and of a fresh army of twelve hundred thousand men." He added, that "he had sent Ney before to Wilna, to reorganise everything in that place—that he would be seconded by Rapp, who would then proceed to Dantzig, Lauriston to Warsaw, and Narbonne to Berlin; that his household would remain with the army, but that the decisive blow must be struck at Wilna. The enemy must be stopped there. There they would find Loison and De Wrede, reinforcements, provisions, and ammunition of every kind; they would afterwards take up their winter-quarters behind the Niemen; and he hoped the Russians would not pass the Vistula before his return. I leave," added he in conclusion "the command of the army to the King of Naples, I hope you will obey him as myself, and that the most perfect harmony will reign among you."

It was then ten o'clock at night: he arose, and pressing their hands affectionately, embraced them all, and set out. He and Caulaincourt were shut up in a carriage, of which his Mameluke Rostan, and Wukasowich, the captain of his guard, occupied the box. Duroc and Lobau followed in a sledge. That very night the Russians surprised and abandoned Joupranoi, or as others state Osmiana, on his direct route; and Napoleon was within an hour of being taken by them. At Miedniki he found the Duke of Bassano, who gave him favourable accounts; he turned Wilna by the suburbs, passed through Wilkowiski, where he changed his carriage for a sledge; halted on the 10th at Warsaw: hence, passing rapidly through Silesia, he revisited Dresden and its monarch, then Hanau, Mayence, and at last reached Paris, where he suddenly made his appearance on the 19th

of December, two days after the publication of his twenty-ninth bulletin.

Nothing remarkable happened to the army after he left it, but the increased severity of the cold and the dissensions which began to arise among the chiefs. The former produced dreadful distresses and accidents. Numbers were seen hovering round the bivouacs at night like groups of spectres, unable to stand, afraid to lie down ; others crowded together on heaps in buildings, where they were stifled or crushed to death, while some rushed madly into the fires, from which their famished comrades drew out their half-consumed limbs. In some respects the winter gave them relief, for it prevented the enemy in a great measure from pursuing them : the Russians also perishing by thousands. Among the French generals who were most lamented, Eblé and Lariboissiere fell martyrs to the cold. One of the most terrible scenes was at Wilna, where they had hoped for everything, the crowd rushing eagerly to the gates, and pressing one another to death in the confusion. Here however they at last procured shelter over their heads, had the luxury of tasting leavened bread, and of eating it as they sat. Here also they beheld with delight and admiration a regiment fully equipped with arms, and in entire new uniforms ; they gazed at them as if they had come from the other world ! Murat here took fright at an alarm of Cossacks and fled to Gumbinnen ; where being afterwards joined by Ney, who brought up the troops and acted throughout with the most exemplary courage and fidelity, he thought proper to call a council of war, and to vent his spleen against the Emperor. He exclaimed, "that it was no longer possible to serve a madman ; that there was no longer any security in adhering to his cause ; that not a single prince in Europe relied either on his word or treaties. He bitterly regretted his rejecting the propositions of England ; had he not done so," he added,

"he should still have been a powerful sovereign like the Emperor of Austria and the King of Prussia."

Here he was interrupted by Davoust, who observed with great animation, "The King of Prussia and Emperor of Austria are monarchs by the grace of God ; sovereigns whose thrones are cemented by the power of time and the long usage and hereditary attachment of their subjects. But you," said he, "are king only by the grace of Napoleon and of French blood : and you can continue king only by the power of Napoleon, and by alliance with France. You are blinded by black ingratitude." And he immediately added, that "he should forthwith denounce him to the Emperor." Murat was abashed and confounded. He felt that he was guilty ; and thus was extinguished the first spark of that treason which at a later period was destined to prove the destruction of France. Murat, soon after, stung by a letter which he received from his wife, who had exercised some act of sovereignty in his absence, of which he was jealous, hurried forward from Marienwerder to Posen, where he abandoned the army and disappeared. This was on the 16th of January, twenty-three days before Schwartzenberg disconnected himself from the French army under Prince Eugene, and sixteen days after Macdonald had learnt the defection of Yorck and Massenbach, on the last day of the preceding year. This defection was disavowed by the King of Prussia, but very soon (as might be expected) followed up by other acts of the same kind. In all the towns, after passing the Niemen and Poland, the inhabitants manifested their inward joy at seeing the French troops return discomfited and fugitives. The troops, however, kept a firm and erect countenance. Vanquished by the elements, they did not fear the face of man. In some places this feeling broke out into open violence. Davoust's carriage was stopped at Königsberg by the mob, when the marshal leaping

out of it, seized one of the ringleaders, and making his domestics bind him behind his carriage, drove off with his captive unmolested. The French sick and wounded were almost utterly neglected, receiving neither attendance nor supplies of food. Several thousands perished in this manner at the convent of St. Basil at Wilna; but the stench arising from their dead bodies infected the conquerors, and avenged the conquered. The Russians arrived on the Vistula on the 22nd of January and the day following; when Alexander being about to cross his own frontier, addressed a proclamation to his troops. He stopped their march at Kalitch. The greater part of the French who could, threw themselves into Dantzig.

There is an account of Buonaparte's passage through Warsaw, by the Abbé de Pradt, which, though evidently caricatured, and tinged with the extravagance and prejudices of the writer, is too curious to be omitted in this place. The Abbé had received too many rebuffs from the Emperor for his vanity and forwardness, not to be willing to overcharge this picture. His words are as follows:—

“At length, the 10th of December arrived. I had just received a dispatch from the Duke of Bassano, to inform me of the approach of the diplomatic body which had passed the summer at Wilna. I was engaged in answering him, to make him aware of the objections to his stay in an open town in face of the enemy, when the doors of my apartment flew open, and gave admittance to a tall figure, led in by one of my secretaries to the embassy. ‘Make haste, come, follow me,’ were the words which this phantom addressed to me. A black silk handkerchief enveloped his head, his face was as it were buried in the thickness of the furs in which it was inclosed; his walk was impeded by a double rampart of furred boots: it resembled a scene of apparitions from the other world. I arose, advanced towards him, and catching some

glimpses of his profile, I recognised him, and said, 'Ah ! is it you, Caulaincourt ? Where is the Emperor ?'—'At the hôtel d'Angleterre : he waits for you.'—'Why not alight at the palace ?'—'He does not wish to be known.'—'Have you everything you want ?'—'Let us have some Burgundy and Malaga wine.'—'The cellar, the house, all is at your service—And where are you going in this manner ?'—'To Paris.'—'And the army ?'—'It exists no more,' he said, raising his eyes to heaven.—'And this victory of the Berezina, and the six thousand prisoners talked of by the Duke of Bassano ?'—'That is all over ; some hundreds of men escaped : we had something else to do besides minding them.' Then taking him by the arm, I said to him, '*Monsieur le duc*, it is time to think well of it, and for all the true friends of the Emperor to join in letting him know the truth.'—'What a tumble !' he replied : 'at least I have not to reproach myself with not having warned him of it. Come, let us go : the Emperor attends us.' I precipitated myself into the court-yard, into the street ;—arrived at the hôtel d'Angleterre ; it was half-past one. A Polish sentinel stood at the gate : the master of the hotel looked at me, hesitated for an instant, and then let me pass the threshold of his dwelling. I found in the yard a small carriage mounted on a sledge made of four pieces of fir-wood : it was half-demolished. Two other open sledges served to convey General Lefebre Desnouettes, with another officer, the Mameluke Rostan, and a livery-servant. Behold all that remained of so much grandeur and magnificence. I thought I saw the winding-sheet borne before the funeral of the Saladin. The door of a narrow low room opened mysteriously ; a short parley took place. Rostan recollected and let me in ; they were making preparations for dinner. The Duke of Vicenza went forward to the Emperor, announced, introduced me, and left me alone with him. He was in a mean-looking apartment, with the window-

shutters half-closed to prevent his being seen. An awkward Polish maid-servant was putting herself out of breath with blowing the fire made of green wood, which resisted all her efforts, with a great deal of noise, discharging more moisture in the chimney-corners than it gave warmth to the room. The spectacle of the fall of human grandeur never had any charms for me. I dropped, without any intermediate steps, from the scenes at Dresden, to this lodging in a miserable inn. I had not seen the Emperor since that period: I cannot describe the crowd of feelings, both new and painful, which rose at once in my breast.

“ The Emperor, according to custom, was walking up and down his chamber: he had come on foot from the bridge of Prague to the *hôtel d’Angleterre*. I found him enveloped in a superb pelisse, covered with a green stuff, with magnificent gold trimmings; his head was concealed in a sort of fur cowl, and his leathern boots were loaded with a quantity of fur. ‘ Ah ! Monsieur l’ambassadeur ! ’ said he, laughing. I approached him with eagerness: and in that accent which sentiment alone can inspire, and can alone excuse in the subject to the sovereign, I said to him, ‘ You are well, you have given me a great deal of uneasiness; but at last you are come—how glad I am to see you ! ’ All this was uttered with a rapidity and in a tone which ought to have revealed to him what was passing within me. The unhappy object of so much solicitude did not perceive it.\* A moment after, I helped to take off his pelisse: ‘ How are you off in this country ? ’ Then resuming my place, and returning to the distance which I had only quitted through an emotion easily excused in the circumstances, I traced, with the caution necessary with all sovereigns, but more particularly with a prince of his

\* The Abbé felt an inclination to be familiar with, and to patronise Buonaparte in his reverses, and complains that the latter did not enter into the spirit of this.

humour, the picture of the actual state of the duchy : it was by no means brilliant. I had received that very morning a report of an affair that had taken place on the Bug, near Krislow, in which two battalions of new levies had thrown away their arms at the second discharge, as well as advices that out of twelve hundred horses belonging to the same troops, eight hundred were lost through the neglect of these raw recruits ; farther that five thousand Russians with artillery were marching upon Zamosk. I told him all this ; I insisted on the propriety (for the Emperor's own dignity, as well as that of the confederation) of letting the embassy and the council go quietly away, without waiting the arrival of the enemy ; I enlarged on the inconveniences of the residence of the diplomatic body at Warsaw. I spoke to him of the distress of the duchy and of the Poles : he rejected this idea, and asked with impatience, 'Who, then, has ruined them ?' 'What they have done for six years,' I replied ; 'the scarcity and the continental system, which has deprived them of every kind of commerce.' At these words his eye kindled. 'Where are the Russians ?' *I told him ; he was ignorant of it.*\* 'And the Austrians ?' I told him. 'It is fifteen days,' he said, 'since I have heard of them. And General Reynier ?' The same. I spoke to him of all that the duchy had done for the subsistence of the army : he knew nothing of it. I spoke of the Polish army : 'I have not seen a single person of that country during the campaign,' was his reply. I explained to him why and how the dispersion of the Polish forces had ended in rendering an army of eighty-two thousand men almost invisible. 'What is it the Poles want ?' 'To be Prussians, if they cannot be Poles.' 'And why not Russians ?' with an air of irritation. I explained the reasons of the attachment

\* One would suppose that it was the Abbé who had just left them and that Buonaparte had only heard of such people by report. This is true French : and so of the rest.

of the Poles to the Prussian government: he had no suspicion of them: I knew them so much the more, inasmuch as *the evening before*, some ministers of the duchy, having staid with me a long time after dinner, had determined on laying hold of a connexion with Prussia as the plank to save them from shipwreck. He continued, ‘It is necessary to raise ten thousand Polish Cossacks; a lance and horse will suffice; with these they will be able to stop the Russians.’ I combated this idea, which appeared to me to combine all sorts of objections at once: he insisted; I defended myself, and concluded by saying, ‘*For myself, I see no good except in armies well organised, well paid, and well fed; all the rest signifies little.*’\* I complained of some French agents; and when I told him that it was injurious to send men without decency and without talents into foreign countries, he said, ‘And where are the men of talents?’ The conversation had led me to speak of the little enthusiasm the Austrians had found among the inhabitants of Volhynia; on this subject I quoted the testimony of Prince Louis of Lichtenstein, whom I had entertained at Warsaw, whither he had come, in consequence of a wound received in an engagement on the Bug; and as I attached to his name an epithet of honour which I believed to be fully due to it, he looked stedfastly at me; I paused. ‘Well, and this prince,’ repeating my expression; ‘go on’ I perceived that I had given offence. Shortly after, he dismissed me, desiring me to bring to him after dinner Count Stanislaus Potocki and the minister of finance, whom I had pointed out to him as the two most respectable members of the council. This interview had lasted nearly a quarter of an hour. The Emperor had not ceased walking and using gestures the whole time, as I have always seen him do. Sometimes he fell into an appearance of a profound reverie: it was his custom. We rejoined him about three

\* One would suppose by this that Buonaparte had been in the habit of neither paying, feeding, nor disciplining his armies.

o'clock : he had just risen from table. ' How long have I been at Warsaw ? Eight days—No, only two hours,' he exclaimed, laughing, without other preparation or preamble. ' From the sublime to the ridiculous there is but one step. How do you find yourself, Count Stanislaus, and you, sir, the minister of finance ? ' On the repeated protestations made by these gentlemen of the satisfaction which they felt at seeing him safe and well after so many dangers, ' Dangers ! ' he said : ' not the least. I live in the midst of agitation ; the more I am crossed, the better I am. It is only sluggish kings who grow fat in their palaces : I do so on horseback and in the camp. From the sublime to the ridiculous there is but one step.' It was clear that he saw himself pursued by the hue-and-cry of all Europe, which was to him the greatest possible punishment. ' I find you greatly alarmed here.—' It is because we only know what public rumour tells us.'—' Bah, the army is superb : I have a hundred and twenty thousand men : I have constantly beaten the Russians. They dare not stand before me. They are no longer the soldiers of Friedland and Eylau. We shall hold out in Wilna : I am going in search of three hundred thousand men. Success will make the Russians bold. I will fight two or three battles with them on the Oder, and in six months I shall be again on the Niemen. I weigh heavier on the throne than at the head of my army : assuredly, I quit it with regret, but it is essential to watch Austria and Prussia ; and on my throne I weigh more than at the head of my army. All that has happened is nothing : it is a misfortune ; the effect of the climate ; the enemy has had nothing to do with it, I have beaten him everywhere. They wanted to cut me off at the Berezina : I made sport of that *imbécile* of an admiral' (he could never pronounce the name). ' I had good troops and some cannon ; the position was superb ; fifteen hundred toises (fathoms) of morass, a river.' This was repeated twice over. He added a great

number of things on minds strongly or feebly tempered, almost all that is to be found in the 29th bulletin ; then he went on to say, ' I have seen many of a different stamp. At Marengo I was beaten till six in the evening : the next day I was master of all Italy. At Essling I became master of Austria. That archduke thought to stop me : he has published something, I know not what : my army had already proceeded a league and a half in advance : I had not done him the honour to make any arrangements, and it is known what is to be expected when I come to that. I cannot hinder the Danube from rising sixteen feet in one night. Ah ! but for that it would have been all over with the Austrian monarchy ; but it was written above that I was to marry an archduchess.' This was said with an air of great gaiety. ' In like manner in Russia I cannot hinder it from freezing. They came to tell me every morning that I had lost ten thousand horses in the night. Well, then, good bye ! ' This recurred five or six times. ' Our Norman horses are not so hardy as the Russian ones ; they do not stand more than nine degrees of cold ; the same with the men. Go and look at the Bavarians, there is not one left. Perhaps it will be said that I staid too long at Moscow. That may be, but it was fine : the winter season came on before the usual time : I expected peace there. The 5th of October I sent Lauriston to treat for it. I thought of going to Petersburg ; I had time enough in the southern provinces of Russia, to pass the winter at Smolensk. We shall stop at Wilna : I have left the King of Naples there. Ah ! it is a grand political drama ; he who risks nothing gains nothing. From the sublime to the ridiculous there is but one step. The Russians have shown themselves. The Emperor Alexander is beloved. They have clouds of Cossacks. It is something, this nation ! The peasants of the crown love their government. The nobility mounted on horseback. It was proposed to me to enfranchise the slaves, but I would not listen

to it ; there would have been a general massacre ; it would have been horrible. I made a regular war on the Emperor Alexander ; but, then, again, who would have thought they would have struck such a blow as that of the burning of Moscow ? Nevertheless they attribute it to us ; but it was themselves who did it. It would have done honour to the Romans. Numbers of French have followed me. Ah ! they are good subjects ; they will find me again.' Then he plunged into all sorts of digressions on the levying the corps of Cossacks, who, to hear him talk, were to arrest that Russian army, before which three hundred thousand French had just fallen. The ministers in vain insisted on the state of the country : he would not recede. Till then I had thought it right to leave them the ground to themselves. I did not allow myself to mingle in the conversation, till it became an object to interest him in the distresses of the duchy. He granted under the title of a loan a sum of from two to three millions of the copper money of Piedmont, which had been three months at Warsaw, and three or four millions of bills coming due from the contributions of Courland. It was I who drew up the order for the minister of the treasury. He announced the near approach of the diplomatic corps. 'They are spies,' he said, 'I would not have them at my head-quarters. They were forced to come. All of them are spies, solely occupied in conveying intelligence to their several courts.' The conversation was prolonged in this manner for nearly three hours. The fire had gone out : we all of us felt the cold. The Emperor heating himself by dint of speaking, had not perceived it. He replied to a proposal to traverse Silesia. 'Ah, ah ! but Prussia.' In fine, after repeating two or three times more, '*From the sublime to the ridiculous there is but one step,*' after inquiring if he had been recognised, and adding that it was indifferent to him ; after renewing to the ministers the assurance of his protection, and making them promise to take courage, he begged to

depart. I gave him the assurance that in the course of the embassy nothing which concerned his service had been forgotten. The ministers and myself then addressed him in terms the most affectionate and respectful, wishing him his health and a prosperous journey. 'I have never been better in my life ; if I had the devil at my back I should only be the better for it.' These were his last words. Immediately he mounted into the humble sledge, which bore Caesar and his fortune, and disappeared. A violent shock was near overturning it as it passed through the gateway.

" Such was word for word this famous conversation in which Napoleon showed without disguise his rash and incoherent genius, his cold insensibility, the fluctuation of his mind between a dozen different schemes, his past projects and his dangers to come. It struck me too much not to be quite sure that I have represented it with the greatest accuracy. I have examined myself well, and I have not the smallest consciousness of having either forgotten or altered anything." — *History of the Embassy to Warsaw*, p. 221.

If those who are acquainted with his character from other more authentic sources do not here recognise the likeness to Napoleon, they will at least find a striking picture of the sort of people about him (the army excepted), and of the hydra of vanity, impertinence, and selfishness he had to contend with in a whole nation.\*

\* While the Abbé was making one of his long, tiresome speeches, Buonaparte scrawled on the corner of the chimney-piece the order for his dismissal, and for the return of the embassy to France. In the same book in which the Abbé affects to bewail the misfortunes of Napoleon, and to have done all he could to prevent them, he also boasts that the Emperor would have conquered the whole world, had it not been for one man in it, viz. himself. It is in the same work that the author applies to his hero the epithet of Jupiter-Scapin. If this phrase does not apply altogether to either of the parties, at least there would be no difficulty in making it out between them.

## CHAPTER XLIX.

## CAMPAIGN IN SAXONY IN 1813.

Buonaparte reaches Paris ; activity in recruiting the army ; favourable posture of affairs in Spain ; interview with the pope at Fontainebleau ; the Russians advance through Prussia ; the latter declares war against France ; Bernadotte joins the coalition ; Thorn, Spandau, and Crenztochan surrender to the allies ; Napoleon departs for the army ; Kutusof dies, and is succeeded by Wittgenstein ; battle of Lutzen ; Hamburg taken ; battle of Bantzen ; death of Duroc ; armistice of Pleisswitz ; its deceptive character ; hostilities renewed ; Austria joins the allies ; plan of the campaign sketched by Bernadotte and Moreau ; perfidy of the latter ; battle of Dresden ; Moreau fatally wounded ; Vandamme's corps destroyed by the allied troops.

ON the morning after Buonaparte's return, all Paris resounded with the news ; the doubts and uneasiness which had existed for some time past were dispelled ; and with new hopes former confidence was restored. The twenty-ninth bulletin, which had just appeared in the *Moniteur*, prepared the public mind for great reverses ; but the malcontents were disappointed by the frankness and abruptness with which he had disclosed the particulars and extent of his failure, and they complained that he had purposely exaggerated them in order to give the recital an air of greater magnanimity and candour. Some persons can hardly contain their surprise that the better to gratify the eagerness of their enemies for such an event, the Parisians did not turn round upon Buonaparte at this very first opportunity as an impostor and usurper. They cannot conceive how in the circumstances in which they were placed which demanded the greatest exertions and sacrifices, the French did not refuse to

make any, and at once give up the contest in despair. They think that as the Russians had gone the length of burning Moscow to show their loyalty and patriotism, the French could do no less than send a deputation half-way to the Niemen with the surrender of the keys of Paris, to show their sense of such disinterested and heroic conduct by reversing the picture and opposing a complete foil to it. They give you to understand that as the allies were about to turn against the French, the latter should have anticipated them by turning against themselves, and begging pardon of these barefaced mouthers about liberty and independence, for having ever ventured to defend theirs. Finally, that they ought to have applied to the Prince-Regent to send them a king *not* of their own choosing, for the honour of France, the safety of Europe, and the peace of the world. They were bad enough, but not quite so base, so prone, so mad as these gratuitous advisers and hypothetical suborners of slavery would have them.

The Emperor convoked the council of state. "All had gone well," he said—"Moscow was in his power—every obstacle was overcome—the conflagration of the city had made no material change in the condition of the French army; but winter had been productive of a general calamity, in consequence of which the army had sustained very great losses." He is here accused by the adverse party of disingenuousness in laying the blame on the seasons, and not on his own bad generalship. Had he not been victorious, he must have suffered less. Had he been defeated in battle by the Russians, he could not have staid in their country till winter compelled him to quit it. But whether advancing or retreating, in the plenitude of his strength, or in the most straitened circumstances, he vanquished—at the Moskwa, at Malo-Jaroslavetz, at the field of Katowa, lastly, at the passage of the Berezina. They might have done wisely in leaving it to the season (their surest ally) to destroy him, but they did

so. They came victorious out of the struggle not by resisting, but by enduring more than others—and more than Napoleon had been led by former example to expect. Farther, it is stated (to make out a triumphant case) that the whole of the grand army was destroyed, that not a man of it was left, not owing to the inclemency of the seasons, but abstractedly to the blunders and incapacity of its chief, to make which account good, *lists are given of five hundred thousand men who did not return out of four hundred and fifty thousand* (the utmost number that went), when presently after it is shown that fifty-four thousand soldiers had been able to throw themselves into the Prussian garrisons alone. The accounts, in short, vary according to the object which the malice or servility of the writer has in view at the time, and are not at all to be depended on. They do not pretend to be true, but loyal.

Addresses came pouring in to the Emperor from all the principal towns: speeches were delivered by the orators of different public bodies of a sufficiently fulsome description: the public offices were called into double activity; and in a short time, with the assistance of a decree of the senate, anticipating the conscription of 1814, he was enabled to carry his levies of every kind to three hundred and fifty thousand men. In this number were included the hundred cohorts or one hundred thousand youth of the first ban of national guards, who had been placed in frontier garrisons as militia, but were now converted into regular soldiers of the line; and forty thousand seamen, who being of no use to a navy which did not exist, and merely idled away their time in the seaport towns, were formed into corps of artillerymen. The affairs of Spain were at this time in a favourable posture for Buonaparte. Lord Wellington, after the battle of Salamanca, being ill supported by the Spanish chiefs, repulsed before Burgos, and in danger of being intercepted by Soult, who had raised the siege of

Cadiz and was coming to join D'Erlon, retreated according to his usual practice into the territories of Portugal ; and enabled Napoleon to withdraw from the war in the Peninsula a hundred and fifty skeletons of battalions, which he made use of as the means of disciplining his new conscripts. Four regiments of guards, one of Polish cavalry, and one of *gens-d'armes*, were at the same time brought from Spain. To these were to have been added four regiments of guards of honour, to be raised by enrolling ten thousand youths of the higher ranks as troops of the Imperial household ; but the republican jealousy of the old guard put a stop to the scheme. The greatest difficulty was in recruiting and remounting the cavalry, and restoring the artillery and *materiel* of the army which had been lost in the late campaign. For this purpose the treasures in the vaults of the Tuileries, which though largely drawn upon for the preparations of the preceding year, were not yet exhausted, were again resorted to by Buonaparte, whose munificence and whose economy were alike princely. Artisans were set to work ; horses were purchased in every quarter ; and such was the active spirit of Napoleon, and such the extent of his resources, that he promised the legislative body (and kept his word) without any addition to the national burdens, to provide the sum of three hundred millions of francs to repair the losses of the Russian campaign.

Buonaparte at this time endeavoured to settle his differences with the Pope, which were a stumbling-block to a number of good Catholics, and might tend to lessen that popularity, of which he at present wished to secure as large a share as possible. The Holy Father had been detained at Savona till June 1812. He was then hastily removed to Fontainebleau, where he arrived on the 19th of that month. He was here treated with every mark of respect ; and had every indulgence allowed him, except his liberty. He remained at Fontainebleau till Napoleon's return from

Russia ; and it was on the 19th of January, 1813, that the Emperor, having left St. Cloud under pretext of a hunting-party, suddenly presented himself before the aged Pontiff. He exerted all the powers of persuasion which he possessed to induce Pius VII. to close with his views. He rendered the submission which he required more easy to the conscience of the head of the church, by not insisting on any express cession of his temporal rights, and by granting a delay of six months on the question of canonical instalment. Eleven articles were agreed to and subscribed by the Emperor and the Pope. But hardly was this done, ere the feud broke out afresh. It was of importance to Napoleon to have the schism healed as soon as possible, since the Pope refused to acknowledge the validity of his second marriage, and of course to ratify the legitimacy of his son. He therefore published the articles of the treaty in the *Moniteur*, as containing a new Concordat. The Pope ready to pick a quarrel, more particularly in the present circumstances, complained of this step, stating that the articles were not a Concordat in themselves, but only the preliminaries, on which after due consideration such a treaty might have been formed. He was indignant at what he termed circumvention on the part of the Emperor of France, and refused to abide by the alleged Concordat. Thus failed Napoleon's attempt to terminate the schism of the church ; and the ecclesiastical bickerings recommenced with more acrimony than ever.

Buonaparte was greatly incensed when he heard of Murat's conduct and departure from the army on the 16th of January, and substituted Eugene Beauharnais in his place, with the remark, "The Viceroy is more accustomed to the management of military affairs on a large scale ; and besides, enjoys the full confidence of the Emperor." This oblique sarcasm considerably increased the coldness between the two brothers-in-law. Meantime, the Russians continued to advance without opposition into Prussia, having left behind

them the line of their own territory, which was to be a wall of brass, a sacred barrier to others, but which they were to pass whenever they pleased: such virtue is there in a soil where the growth of slavery had never been blighted! A clod of Russian earth is not under any circumstances to be trampled by a foreign foot. Why? Because a serf is bound to it and cannot get free. A clod of French earth is to be trampled by the foreign foe. Why? Because the example of liberty had taken root in it and had till now defied the obscene hoofs of barbarous and mercenary hordes to extirpate it! Therefore, it was to be doubly blotted out, first, from the old hatred to the thing; secondly, from the new right of revenge for having failed so often before, retaliation being just on the part of kings, but unjust on the part of the people. So say the statists. If slavery has rights, and liberty has none, if kings have rights and the people have none, not even to defend themselves, except as the slaves of kings, if war is to be always and strictly defensive on the part of the people, but may be instantly turned into the offensive against them, so be it said and understood any where but in these pages; but there it shall never be so said or understood for an instant! It is conjectured that if the king of Prussia had refused to join the coalition against France, his subjects might in that moment of excitation have found some one else to have placed at the head of the government: so eager were these brain-sick patriots to rivet on their own chains and those of others. But there was no occasion to resort to popular violence to make the king adopt this course. It was easy for him to revert to the feelings and the line of conduct of which he had set the example in 1792, and which nothing but the extremity of his circumstances had ever interrupted; and on the 1st of March he concluded a treaty offensive and defensive with Russia for the same implied objects. Previously to this, he had suddenly left Berlin and repaired to Breslau,

where there were no French soldiery. Immediately after, he published an address to his people, calling his armies together and giving the signal for the latent and wide-spread spirit of animosity against the French to manifest itself.\* On the 15th of March the Emperor Alexander arrived at Breslau. The meeting between the two sovereigns was affecting (to them). The King of Prussia wept. "Courage, my brother," said Alexander, "these are the last tears which Napoleon shall cause you to shed." It is to be observed that the tone of these princes was that of persons who were and had always been friends, however necessity or policy might have forced them to dissemble; that as despotic princes they had and could have but one interest at heart, one feeling in common; that whatever appearances they had assumed or engagements they had entered into were merely royal masquerading to conceal or to attain their fixed and favourite purpose; and one of them wept at being assured by the other that this object which had been so long deferred, the restoring the people to their lawful proprietors, had now a chance of being accomplished with the unlooked-for aid and the infuriated acclamations of the people themselves.

On the 16th of March, Prussia declared war against France. That paper, in order to give a plausible colour to the tone of patriotism and independence which it adopted, ought to have contained the manifesto of the Duke of Brunswick as its preamble; it should have reprobated it as the cause of all the

\* It has been remarked as a peculiarity in the Prussians that they did not like to be subjected to foreigners, who must therefore (it is argued) have used them very ill. I wonder, if the French had conquered England, whether we should have been reconciled to them, if they had used us ever so well. This is so far from being a singularity, that the French are themselves the sole instance of a people who, when these same Prussians afterwards imposed it on them, submitted without a murmur or a struggle to a foreign yoke. I know that a nice distinction is here taken between *a foreign yoke* and *a yoke imposed by foreigners*. Should we understand it, if Europe in arms should unite to give us back the Stuart race?

misfortunes of Prussia and of France, have placed this disclaimer as a bar to the repetition of any similar outrages, and then it might have seemed that its own loud professions of the principles of liberty and independence were anything but the most flagrant hypocrisy or loathsome affectation. It ought to have done this at least, before a single human being, who had ever known what the word freedom meant or the resentment due to the insolent refusal of that right to the whole human race, could be supposed to sympathise with it. And yet many friends of freedom took fair words, vague promises, vows made in pain for current payment, for full indemnity and security in this great question, where the rights and liberties of all mankind so often threatened, and which had so often escaped by miracle, were to be once more put at stake, who would not be so grossly imposed upon in a matter where property of their own of five shillings value was depending. But why should I take the responsibility of the indifference or blindness of mankind to their own rights and interests upon myself? What have I to do with it more than others? I have not Gyges's ring to take the remedy into my own hands. Napoleon received the Prussian declaration of war as a thing of course. "It was better," he said, "to have a declared enemy than a doubtful ally." In a few weeks Prussia had an army in the field, eager to avenge the wrongs they had received and still more those they had not been able to inflict; and Blucher took the chief command of it, of whom Buonaparte afterwards said that "he had more trouble from that old dissipated hussar than from all the generals of the allies besides." The Crown-Prince of Sweden also joined the coalition, his attachment to old friends and principles giving way to the new. Austria stood aloof and undecided, inasmuch as in her case the ties of family connexion made a war (should it not turn out a successful one) a matter of great personal delicacy to the sovereign.

Otto, the French minister at Vienna, could however see in the Austrian cabinet a disposition to revive the ancient claims which had been annulled by the victories of Napoleon; and wrote to his court so early as the beginning of January that they were already making a merit of not instantly declaring war against France. As an obvious piece of state policy and to conciliate (as far as possible) the Emperor of Austria, the Empress *Marie-Louise* was soon after appointed regent during the absence of her husband.

In the midst of all these difficulties and hostile preparations accumulating around him, Buonaparte from prudence as well as pride, did not abate of the loftiness of his pretensions. He knew the value of material force; but he also knew the power of opinion. A single word, betraying his weakness or a want of confidence in the continuance of his fortunes, might be fatal. Besides, with the sort of people he had to deal, who thought they had a prescriptive right to all, one concession would only lead to another. If he gave up Poland to Prussia or his claim to the mediation of Switzerland, he would next have to give up Italy to Austria, Spain to Ferdinand, and France to *Louis XVIII*. It was necessary to make a stand somewhere; and he thought he could do this best upon the basis of victory, when he could show himself at once moderate and firm. The only fault he committed was in supposing the allied monarchs too much influenced by political interests and too little by the *esprit de corps*. He would not see this; for he affected to be one of them, by which he lost an immense lever over popular feeling. Indeed, the submissions to which he had made the allies stoop might in some degree warrant such a conclusion, but then his power had been absolute: now it was contingent, and there was nothing, he might be sure, they would not do to avenge their wounded pride and recover themselves in their own good opinion by blotting all traces of his power (together with the

recollection of the mortifications it had occasioned them) from the face of the earth. It would therefore have been better to have followed up his advantages, to have struck home, and thus regained his old ascendancy over their fears, and not have stopped to negotiate on equal terms which were impossible. There never was nor could be any such feeling in the case. It was a question whether inordinate pretensions on the one side could be put down by sheer force on the other. The pride of birth is a madness, a disease in the blood, which nothing but "the iron rod, the torturing hour" can tame. Buonaparte had a sufficient force to wield, his genius was unimpaired; but he had lost one incalculable advantage, the persuasion that he could not be conquered. If he had been conquered by the seasons, yet he had been conquered; and he might be so again. The victory was no longer deemed as certain beforehand as after it had happened. This made his enemies hold out in circumstances where they would formerly have given up, and his friends shrink from the mere possibility of a turn of fortune. This in spite of his first successes in the summer of 1813, and the ability and resources he displayed, was the casting-weight against him, for it led to the improvement of accidents which would not before have been noticed, and to repeated defections, which would not have been ventured upon, while it was thought no disparity of numbers could be of any avail against him.

In the month of April he had increased his army to three hundred and fifty thousand men, in addition to the great garrisons maintained in Dantzic, Thorn, Modlin, Zamosk, Custrin, &c. augmented as they were by the remains of the grand army which had taken refuge in these places. He had besides an active levy going on in Italy, and a large army in Spain; so that he was not ill prepared either for peace or war. In the field he was perhaps equal to

his enemies, for his own skill and masterly combinations might be said to double his numbers. He had to contend with hatred abroad, for those whom he had beaten attributed to him all the wars, defeats, and disasters in which their own governments had involved them. To counterbalance or keep in check this rising spirit, he wanted (what now began to fail him) the opinion that he was invincible. But all that it was possible to do in the circumstances he did: nor can we blame him, if gods and men were averse to his success. The Russians relying on the favourable disposition of Prussia had left the various fortresses behind them, and advanced towards the Oder and the Elbe. The King of Sweden in virtue of a convention into which he had entered at Abo, crossed over to Stralsund in the month of May 1813, with a contingent of thirty-five thousand men, with which when joined to fifty or sixty thousand Russians and Germans, he meant to attack Buonaparte's left flank, while he was engaged in front by the main body of the Russian and Prussian armies. Three flying corps under Czernicheff, Tettenborn, and Winzingerode, spread along both sides of the Elbe. The French everywhere retreated to concentrate themselves under the walls of Magdeburg or other fortified places, of which they still kept possession. Meantime, Hamburg, Lubeck, and other towns declared for the allies, and received their troops with an alacrity which in the case of Hamburg was afterwards severely punished. The French general, Morand, endeavoured to put a stop to this tide of ill fortune by throwing four thousand men into Luneburg; but he was hardly in the place when the Russians, under the command of Czernicheff, suddenly appeared, forced their way into the town, and on the second of April killed or took prisoners the whole of Morand's corps. Prince Eugene, wishing to strike a decisive blow, marched from Magdeburg, with a view of surprising Berlin; but was

himself surprised at Mockern, driven back, and obliged to shut himself up in Magdeburg, where he was blockaded.

Denmark, which had always been a firm adherent to France, at this time appeared to waver in its determination. The King of Saxony retired from the impending storm to a place of security in Franconia; while his army separated themselves from the French, and throwing themselves into Torgau, offered to stipulate for a neutrality. Davoust retreated northward after blowing up the bridge at Dresden, which city shortly after became the head-quarters of the Emperor of Russia and the King of Prussia. Three of the fortresses held by the French in Prussia—Thorn, Spandau, and Crenztochan—surrendered to the allies; but the expectation that the other garrisons would follow the example was put a stop to by the arrival of the numerous forces which Napoleon had in so short a time levied to repair his late losses. He left St. Cloud on the 15th of April, stopped eight days at Mayence to give time for the collecting of the troops which he sent forward in the direction of Erfurt, where he arrived himself on the 24th. Prince Eugene at the approach of the new French levies through the passes of the Thuringian mountains, removed from Magdeburg, and formed a junction with them on the Saale. The force present in the field was about a hundred and fifteen thousand. It was composed chiefly of the new conscripts. The allied army was drawn up between Leipsic and Dresden; and they meant (had they not been anticipated by Buonaparte) to have given battle in the plains of Jena as “a field fitting for their vengeance,” in the language of their partisans. Why the recovering a lost field of battle in a war between two nations should be termed *vengeance* does not appear, except on the supposition (which indeed is everywhere implied) that for an army not led by an hereditary despot to defend itself against, much more to beat, one that is so led,

is an outrage and an assumption of equality which merits every kind of reprobation and exemplary punishment. This single phrase explains the whole secret. "Their speech bewrayeth them!" A change of some importance had taken place in the Russian army by the death of Kutusof. He was succeeded in the command by Wittgenstein.

Skirmishes took place at Weissenfels and Posern on the 29th of April and the 1st of May. On the last day (the eve of the battle of Lutzen) a contest took place in the defile of Rippach, near Posern, when Marshal Bessieres coming up to see how the action went was killed by a spent cannon ball. He was sincerely lamented by the Emperor and the whole army. His loss was particularly regretted by Duroc, who was soon after to meet his death in the same casual way, and who seemed almost to have a presentiment of it.\* The war kept its pace: the French continued to advance upon Leipsic; the allies approached from the north to defend it. The centre of the French army was stationed at a village called Kaya, under the command of Ney. He had asked particularly to have the young conscripts placed under his charge, and said he would answer for the consequences. "Our grey-beards," he said, "know as much of the matter as we do, and boggle at a number of difficulties; but these brave youths think of nothing but glory." He was supported by the imperial guard, with its new parks of artillery, drawn up before the well-known town of Lutzen, which had witnessed the last conflict of Gustavus Adolphus. Marmont commanded the right. The left reached from Kaya to the Elster. Buonaparte expected to have found the allied troops on the other side of Leipsic, and was hurrying forward for that purpose; but encouraged by the presence of the Emperor Alexander and the King of Prussia, they

\* *Ceci devient trop longue, nous y passerons tous*, was the emphatic expression that he used on hearing of the fate of Marshal Bessieres.

came to the unusual resolution of advancing to meet him, crossed the Elster during the night, and in the morning of the 2nd, assaulted the French centre with the choicest of their troops under Blucher. The fury of the attack succeeded, and the allies were on the point of gaining possession of Kaya. Napoleon was not wanting to himself at this crisis. He hurried in person to bring up his guard to sustain the shock which his centre had received, while he moved forward his two wings, commanded by Macdonald and Bertrand, and supported by his batteries like moving fortresses, so as to outflank and surround the main body of the allies. The battle lasted for several hours: at last, the allies finding they could not break through the French centre, and seeing the French press upon them on each side, withdrew from the danger with difficulty, and with a tremendous loss, estimated at not less than eighteen or twenty thousand men. Two circumstances mainly contributed to the success of the battle. General Bertrand came up after it began, in time to enable Marmont to join the centre when it was pushed hardest; and Miloradowich, from some cause or other, was absent. Scharnhorst, reputed the best tactician in the Prussian service, was killed, and Blucher wounded. The youth of Paris and of the German universities emulated each other's ardour and prodigality of life in this contest; the one striving to recover that independence which a crusade against liberty had deprived them of, and the others fighting for that victory, which was the only security for their independence or honour for a single hour. As to the metaphysical students of the north of Germany, we might stop to ask, could not the subtleties of the Kantean philosophy purge away the grossness of the doctrine of *divine right*; or teach them to resolve the hackneyed sophistry of a state paper into a series of moral equations? Those who survive are as silent as the dead on this subject at present. The King of Prussia himself set a good example to the troops under

him ; and charged at the head of his regiment of guards. Buonaparte made soldiers kings, and kings soldiers. The want of a sufficient number of cavalry prevented him from following up his victory as he otherwise might. He however remained in possession of the field of battle and of all his former reputation. Couriers were immediately dispatched with the news of the battle, even to Constantinople.

The allied monarchs fell back upon the Mulda. The French troops were again admitted into Torgau, notwithstanding the opposition of the Saxon general, Thielman ; and the King of Saxony returned from Prague, whither he had fled, and was conducted back in a kind of triumph to his capital, which he entered on the 12th. The allies could no longer maintain themselves on the Elbe, though the main body retired no farther than Bautzen, a town affording a strong position near the sources of the Spree, about twelve leagues from Dresden. A corps of observation under Bulow watched Berlin, and kept open the road to Silesia. One of the consequences of this retrograde movement was that Czernicheff and Tettenborn were obliged to withdraw their protection from Hamburg and other towns in that direction, which had thrown open their gates to the allies. Hamburg was immediately attacked by Davoust with five or six thousand men, when the terrified inhabitants, to their great surprise, saw the Danish gun-boats and artillery sent from Altona to their assistance. But this demonstration of kindness was of short duration. For the Danes after the battle of Lutzen thinking the star of Napoleon had risen again, and not liking the specimen which the allies had just given them of the connexion between their professions and practices, by insisting on the cession of Norway to Sweden in reward of Bernadotte's exertions in the cause of the independence of nations, and the ties of habitual attachment which ought to bind subjects to sovereigns, had returned to their old alliance with France ; and on

the 30th of May marched five thousand Danish troops in concert with one thousand five hundred French to take possession of the town in the name of the French Emperor. Its allies appear to have paid little attention to the interests of Hamburg, probably because in choosing them it consulted chiefly its own. Three thousand Swedes were to have come from Stralsund to its relief ; but the crown prince, judiciously waiting to have his forces increased instead of helping to diminish them, would not stir. Czernicheff, though by no means pleased with his compulsory retreat from Hamburg, contrived on his march near Haberstadt to cut off a body of French infantry, taking nearly one thousand prisoners, and not letting a single individual escape. Negotiations were going on at the same time with the preparations for war ; Count Bubna came to Dresden on the part of the Emperor of Austria ; and the audiences were often prolonged till midnight.

The war was for a few days confined to skirmishes on the right bank of the Elbe. On the 12th of May, Ney crossed the river near Torgau, and seemed to menace the Prussian capital, probably to induce the allies to leave their strong position at Bautzen. But as they remained stationary there, Napoleon moved forward in person to dislodge them. He quitted Dresden on the 18th. In his road towards Bautzen, he passed the ruins of the beautiful little town of Bischöfswerder, and expressed much concern at finding it had been burnt by the French soldiery after a encounter with a body of Russians. He declared he would rebuild the place, and presented the inhabitants with one hundred thousand francs towards repairing their losses. Arriving at Bautzen on the 21st, the Emperor reconnoitred the formidable position chosen by the allies. It was at a small distance in the rear of the town, and had the Spree in front of it. Their right was defended by fortifications, their left rested on woody eminences. Ney and Lauriston were a little to their right, prepared to act in concert with

Napoleon ; but Yorck and De Tolly, by a successful manœuvre, attacked and dispersed a column of seven thousand Italians, before Ney could come to their assistance. He joined the Emperor about three in the afternoon, and the army effected the passage of the Spree at different points in front of the allied army. Napoleon fixed his head-quarters in the deserted town of Bautzen. The two armies bivouacked in face of each other. The position of the allies covered the principal road to Zittau and that to Goerlich ; their right wing (composed of Prussians) rested on the fortified heights of Klein ; the Russians occupied the woody heights to their left. The centre was rendered unapproachable by commanding batteries.

Napoleon did not try to force this position ; but he resolved to turn it, and succeeded. He made Ney take a considerable circuit round the extreme left of the Russians, while Oudinot engaged them more closely. Miloradowich and the Prince of Wirtemberg, however, made good the defence on this side. The next attempt was made on the heights on the right occupied by the Prussians. Here also the struggle was severe and bloody. It was not till Napoleon brought up all his reserves, and combined them in one desperate effort, that he carried his point. The attack was conducted by Soult, and maintained at the bayonet's point for four hours, when after various success the French remained masters of the ground. At the same time, the corps of Ney, together with those of Lauriston and Reynier, amounting to sixty thousand men, appearing in the enemy's rear, Blucher was compelled to evacuate the heights, which till now he had defended with such obstinacy. Both wings of the allies being turned, they had only to make the best of their retreat, which however they could not effect by the roads to Silesia and Breslau, but were forced to turn near the Bohemian mountains. Night closed in, and the whole of the next day was spent in harassing the enemy's rear, Buonaparte placing him-

self in front of the pursuing column, exposed to a repeated and heavy fire, and urging on the pursuit by such expressions as "You creep, scoundrel!" addressed to one of his general officers.

At the heights of Reichenbach, the Russian rear-guard made a halt; and while the cuirassiers of the guard disputed the pass with the Russian lancers, General Bruyeres was struck down by a bullet. He was a veteran of the army of Italy, and favoured by Buonaparte as the companion of his early victories. But a still severer trial was reserved for Napoleon's feelings. As he surveyed the last point on which the Russians continued to make a stand, a ball killed a trooper by his side. "Duroc," he said to his old and faithful follower, "Fortune has a spite at us to-day." Some time after, as the Emperor with his suite rode along a hollow way, three cannon were fired, one ball shattered a tree close to Napoleon; and rebounding, killed General Kirchener, and mortally wounded Duroc, whom the Emperor had just spoken to. A halt was ordered, and for the rest of the day Napoleon remained in front of his tent surrounded by his guard, who condoled with the Emperor, as if he had lost one of his children. He visited the dying man, whose inside was torn by the shot, and expressed his affection and regret. On no other but that single occasion was he observed so much overcome or absorbed by grief, as to decline listening to military details or issuing military orders. "Everything to-morrow," was his answer to those who ventured to ask his commands. He made more than one decree in favour of Duroc's family, and placed the sum of two hundred Napoleons in the hands of the pastor, in whose house Duroc had expired, to raise a monument to his memory, for which he himself dictated an epitaph. In Bessieres and Duroc, Napoleon lost two of his best servants and most attached friends; and lost them at a time when he most needed them. Bessieres was the more compliant of the two;

but Duroc had more of his confidence, and had more influence over him than any other person. He softened his resentments, diverted the ebullitions of his momentary impatience, without directly opposing him; and by being always governed more by a sense of duty than even his respect for the Emperor, exercised a kind of authority like a second conscience over Napoleon himself. He was not much more than forty when he died.

On the day preceding that sanguinary conflict an armistice had been proposed by Count Nesselrode, in compliance it was said with the wishes of Austria, who by coming forward as mediator could easily go over to the other side. It was enforced in a letter from Count Stadion to Talleyrand, whom as well as Fouché Napoleon had summoned to his presence, the latter confessedly because he did not think it safe to leave him at Paris. Meanwhile he marched forward, occupied Breslau (from whence the princesses of the Prussian royal family removed into Bohemia) and relieved Glogau, where the garrison had begun to suffer from famine. Some severe skirmishes were fought; but the main army of the allies retreated into Upper Silesia, showing no inclination for a third general engagement. The armistice (a mischievous one) was concluded on the 4th of June, and Buonaparte testified his desire for peace, by resigning the possession of Breslau and Lower Silesia to the allies, by which they regained their communications with Berlin.

During the armistice, Napoleon either to amuse himself or others, or to throw an air of gaiety and carelessness over the embarrassments of his situation, sent for the French actors to Dresden. He was observed at this period to have changed his tastes, as he now seemed to prefer comedy to tragedy, which is easily understood. He had now tragedy enough about him, without going to look for it in the regions of imagination, which is the privilege of minds at ease, and that from sanguine earnestness and confidence in

good are thrown back by pictures of terror and pity, only the more forcibly upon their own store of enjoyment or hope. He had the celebrated actress Mademoiselle Mars introduced to him, and in answer to some question relative to her *début* on the stage, she said, "She had begun quite young, and had crept on without being perceived." The Emperor replied, "that it was impossible for her to avoid notice; and he himself, in common with the public, had always done justice to her rare talents." He found leisure at this busy period to enter into a long criticism on a piece of Fabre d'Englantine's, whom he did not like as an old member of the Committee of Public Safety, and remarked slightly of some piece intended for representation, that *it might please the Court of Saxony*. This exclusive tone of predilection and admiration for the French cost him a good deal. His admiration was the worse, because it was that of a foreigner, who neither had nor could have a perfect sympathy with them. A Frenchman would have been satisfied with what the French *were*: he wanted them to be something more; and in endeavouring to make them a great people, and fancying that he had done so, met his own ruin. When their superiority to all the world was to be proved by anything but a flippant assumption of it, they sunk even below the standard of mediocrity, as he soon found reason to acknowledge.

The armistice of Pleisswitz, which lasted nearly three months, gave the finishing blow to the last chance of success which Napoleon possessed. It was merely meant and made use of to gain time for reinforcements to arrive, to foment intrigues, to find pretexts for division and desertion, and to place a stumbling-block in the way of his new career of victory. He had to do with a foe that it was not enough to strike down—he must repeat the blow to disable him from rising. If they held out their hand in show of friendship, it was only to betray with the

first opportunity, on the principles of piety and loyalty. He had to contend with an adversary like the fabled monsters of old, that was severed, joined again, that was crushed, but received new life and warmth soon after, and that having always the will, could only be tamed by taking from it the power to hurt. Events proved this too late. The Emperor crowned with success, halted before his baffled enemies, to whom he could now make concessions without compromising his dignity ; his sacrifices could only be regarded as moderation. Napoleon in this was a victim to the *school-boy* cant of Europe ; to the conventional hypocrisy of mankind. They asked for proofs of his moderation, and when they were given, turned them against him ; they called out against his want of plain-dealing and sincerity, with secret treaties and articles of legitimacy in their pockets. They said, "If you do not come into our proposals, we will accuse you of a desire for eternal war : but the instant you agree to peace, we will break off, insist on terms which we know cannot be granted, and make war upon you nevertheless." The congress of Prague, which met according to agreement, on the 29th of July, was merely a mask to cover or to complete designs which had been entered into, two months before, for the overthrow of Napoleon's power, and the restoration of the old order of things in Europe. Russia sent a French subject by birth as its representative to it. The Emperor had so little doubt of the understanding that Austria at this time had with his enemies, that he said, half good-humouredly, half angrily to the Austrian negotiator, "Come, now, confess : tell me how much they have paid you for this ?" What was he to do in these circumstances ? Was he to brave opinion, and thus give double effect to the physical force of the allies ? Or was he to give way to opinion and thus make an opening and grant time to the physical force arrayed against him ? We have his own words in regard to this point.

“ How was I perplexed,” said he, “ when conversing on this subject, to find myself the only one to judge of the extent of the danger, or to adopt means to avert it! I was harassed on the one hand by the coalesced powers, who threatened our very existence: and on the other by the want of spirit in my own subjects, who in their blindness seemed to make common cause with them: by our enemies, who were labouring for my destruction, and by the importunities of my people and even my ministers, who urged me to throw myself on the mercy of foreigners. And I was obliged to maintain a good appearance in this embarrassing situation, to reply haughtily to some, and sharply to reprove others, who created difficulties behind me, encouraged the mistaken course of public opinion, instead of seeking to give it a proper direction, and suffered me to be tormented with demands for peace, when they ought to have proved that the only means of obtaining it was to urge me ostensibly to war. . . . . The circumstances in which we were placed were extraordinary and totally new: it would be vain to seek for any parallel to them. I was myself the keystone of an edifice not sufficiently consolidated, and the stability of which depended on each of my battles. Had I been conquered at Marengo, France would have encountered all the disasters of 1814 and 1815, without those prodigies of glory which succeeded, and which will be immortal. It was the same at Austerlitz and Jena; and again at Eylau and elsewhere.\* The vulgar failed not to blame my ambition as the cause of all these wars. But they were not of my choosing: they were produced by the nature and force of events; they arose out of that conflict between the past and

\* Yet the allies affected to take vengeance for all these victories by the subjugation of France and overthrow of its government, as if such a scheme had never entered their heads till now, or as if the repeated attempt to carry it into effect had not been the cause of all the grievances of which they complained. The force of hypocrisy could no further go.

the future—that constant and permanent coalition of our enemies, which obliged us to subdue, under pain of being subdued.” Suppose Buonaparte had taken the allies at their word, and proposed that each country should give up its conquests and retain only its own independence, which was assumed as a self-evident and categorical principle with respect to France: that Italy should be independent, that the partition of Poland should be annulled, that Russia should give up Finland, that Norway should not be annexed to Sweden, and that England should renounce her exclusive maritime pretensions—would they not have laughed in his face for supposing them for a moment serious in professions of which he alone was to be the dupe, under pain of the *hue-and-cry*, the ban and anathema of Europe, all at once turned disinterested and moral? He saw the dilemma into which they strove to drive him, with odium on one hand, and imbecility on the other. They had determined henceforward to abide neither by law nor treaty with him; and while they absolved themselves from all ties, to set up a stricter standard of morality for him, from the double *vantage-ground* they possessed of old prejudice and recent successes. To make head against such odds, France should have contained another Moscow in her bosom: but her ruler seemed the only man in a nation of grasshoppers. In opposition to most of his counsellors, he held out against the proposal to give up his influence either in Italy or Germany as the price of the adherence of Austria. “If I relinquish Germany,” said he, “Austria will but contend the more perseveringly till she obtains Italy. If, on the other hand, I surrender Italy to her, she will, in order to secure the possession of it, endeavour to expel me from Germany. Thus, one concession granted will only serve as an inducement to seek or enforce new ones. The first stone of the edifice being removed, the downfall of the whole will inevitably ensue. I shall be urged on from one

step to another, till I am driven back to the castle of the Tuilleries, whence the French people, enraged at my weakness and blaming me for their disasters, will doubtless banish me, and perhaps justly, though they may themselves immediately become the prey of foreigners." This is very nearly a sketch of what afterwards happened. War gave him a chance: in negotiation he had none; for whatever concessions he had made, would have been purposely clogged with farther conditions, which must have made it impossible or infamous to comply with them. It is said that at one moment, however, Napoleon had determined to sign the terms prescribed by Austria, and took up the pen for that purpose, but stopped short, saying, "What Austria requires is worth disputing sword in hand." It will scarcely be credited, that among the persons who came to Dresden during the armistice, was Murat, who, after hearing of the victory of Lutzen, could not keep away from the scene of such dazzling achievements, and actually figured at the head of his cavalry during the remainder of the campaign, though he had already entered into private engagements with Austria; and in the January following, formed a strict and public alliance with England and Austria, in order to keep a throne, by joining to ruin and hunt down the man who had raised him to it. There seems to have been a studied and malicious refinement on the part of the allies, in the selection of these apostates to honour and their country, so as at once to wound the feelings of their old benefactor, and degrade all those who had ever taken part with him.

The armistice was broken off on the 10th of August, when Austria joined the allies; and, in the night between the 10th and 11th, brilliant fireworks were let off between Prague and Trachenberg, the headquarters of the Emperor of Russia and the King of Prussia, to announce to these sovereigns the joyful news and the hope that the times were coming when

thrones should be safe, if not from sons, from subjects. The account of the battle of Vittoria had arrived in time to brace the tone of the negotiations, and to try Buonaparte's diplomatic patience to the utmost, who dispatched Soult to take the command of the French armies in Spain, and oppose the further progress of the Duke of Wellington towards the south of France, which this general in his great gallantry and love of national independence was about to invade, if he could, and force a government upon it. A story is told that Soult's wife was very angry at this nomination of her husband to so distant and difficult a command, and went to remonstrate with Buonaparte about it, who answered, "Madam, I am not your husband, and if I were, you dare not use me thus." In the interim between the suspension and the renewal of hostilities, he had strongly fortified Dresden, intending to make it the centre of his operations, from which he meant to sally out and defeat his enemies, as they presented themselves at different points round him; had established an intrenched camp at Pirna, and thrown a bridge of boats over the Elbe near Koenigstein. This intimated his apprehensions of an attack from the Bohemian mountains, behind which the Austrians had been stationing their army. Here he collected the young conscripts who poured in from the French frontier, learning their exercise by the way.

In the beginning of August, Napoleon had assembled about two hundred and fifty thousand men. This formidable force was placed so as to confront the enemy's troops. At Leipsic were sixty thousand under Oudinot; on the borders of Silesia, Macdonald commanded a hundred thousand men; another army of fifty thousand men was quartered near Zittau, and St. Cyr was stationed with twenty thousand at Pirna to watch the passes into Bohemia; while the Emperor occupied Dresden with his guard, amounting to twenty-five thousand men. A considerable army was collected

in Italy under the Viceroy ; and a corps of twenty-five thousand Bavarians were to act as a reserve under General Wrede. Buonaparte had with him his best and oldest generals. The army of the allies amounted to nearly double the number of the French. There were a hundred and twenty thousand Austrians, together with eighty thousand Russians and Prussians under Schwartzenberg in Bohemia, being disposed round Prague, and concealed behind the Erzegebirge hills to the south of Dresden. The army of Silesia, commanded by Blucher, amounted to eighty thousand more. Near the gates of Berlin was the Crown-Prince of Sweden with thirty thousand Swedes and sixty thousand Russians and Prussians, led by Bulow and Tauenstein, by Winzingerode and Woronzoff. Walmoden was at Schwerin with thirty thousand mixed troops; Hiller, with forty thousand Austrians, watched the Viceroy in Italy ; and Reuss was opposed to the Bavarians with an equal force.

The plan of the campaign was agreed upon at a council of the allied sovereigns, at which two Frenchmen assisted, Bernadotte and Moreau, as if treachery were a kind of contagion in France. The latter had come all the way from America, where he affected a sort of quaker morality and republican simplicity, to join the autocrat of all the Russias in overturning the independence and institutions of his country, which was a round-about way of disproving and avenging by an overt act of treason in 1813 the imputation of it which had been brought against him in 1804 and the suspicion of it to which he had made himself liable in 1797. His friends and admirers did not the less but the more continue to sanction a life of perfidy and meanness, by tacking to his name the epithet of "the *virtuous* Moreau." As to the excuses that have been set up for his conduct in siding with the enemies of his country, they are such as go to prove that there can be neither traitors nor treason. If before we apply these hard names, we wait to

inquire which side is in the right, of course this is matter of opinion. *Traitor* and *renegade* are words that have rather a more pointed and positive meaning. The old Russian who had his son condemned to death as a traitor, did not stand upon any such metaphysical nicety: why then should Moreau join in hallooing on this herd of untutored savages against his country, as if, having once given a loose to their prejudices and fury, he could bring them back when he chose to the limits of reason and propriety? If we wait for the traitor to confess that his object is to restore his country to an odious slavery by first subjecting it to a foreign yoke, we shall never find an unprincipled knave so deficient in excuses. Moreau was doubly a traitor to his country and to his party, to glory and to freedom; and if we still are inclined to throw a veil of soft sentimentality or lenient censure over his conduct, because he came over to *our* side, this is a merit which all traitors must have, that of turning against themselves and going over to the enemy. The parallel which has been drawn between him and Coriolanus is a slur upon history. If Coriolanus had been secretly leagued with the enemies of Rome and had been detected and banished for it, and had then returned with the Volscians to fulfil his first intention, there would have been a resemblance in the two cases. Thus the slime of servile pens is always ready (as well as it is able) to varnish over the character of a modern poltroon or to stain that of an ancient hero! The principle of the campaign as sketched by the two French generals and adopted by their patrons was a sufficient tribute to Buonaparte's superiority, and showed a knowledge both of him and of themselves. It was never to come to close quarters with him in person, but to draw him off by false demonstrations and fall upon his troops or his other generals in his absence. Blucher was the first who, with this view, advancing from Silesia and menacing the armies of Macdonald and Ney, induced Bu-

naparte to march to their assistance with his guard and a body of cavalry commanded by Latour-Maubourg.. He left Dresden on the 15th, threw bridges over the Bober, and advanced rapidly, bringing up Macdonald's division to his aid. But the Prussian general, faithful to the plan laid down, retreated across the Kutzbach, and finally established himself on the river Niesse at Jauer. On the 21st of August, Napoleon learnt that while he was pressing forward on the retreating Prussians, Dresden was in danger of being taken. His guards had instant orders to return to Saxony. He himself, leaving Macdonald to keep Blucher in check, set out early on the 23rd. It was time; for Schwartzenberg, together with the Russian and Prussian monarchs and General Moreau, had descended from Bohemia, and concentrating their chief army on the left bank of the Elbe, were already approaching the walls of Dresden. General St. Cyr, who had been left with about twenty thousand soldiers to observe the Bohemian passes, not being in a condition to make a stand against six or seven times his own number, threw himself into Dresden in hopes to defend it till the arrival of Napoleon. The allies displayed their huge force before the city, divided into four columns, about four o'clock on the 25th of August. If they could take Dresden, the blow would be almost fatal by cutting off Buonaparte from his supplies and his communication with France. But the importance of the object or their own unwieldly size (like that of some large-boned bully) seemed to have encumbered their motions; and instead of giving the signal for onset instantly, they waited for the arrival of Klenau with an additional corps, postponing the assault till the next morning.

On the 26th, at break of day, the Allies advanced in six columns, supported by a tremendous fire. They carried two of the principal redoubts of the city; they hemmed in the French on all sides; the shells and balls

began to fall thick in the streets and on the houses of the terrified inhabitants ; and, after engaging all his troops, St. Cyr, whose behaviour was truly heroical, felt he had yet too few men to defend a place of such extent. It was at this crisis when all thought a surrender inevitable, that columns were seen advancing on Dresden from the right side of the Elbe, sweeping over its magnificent bridges, and pressing forward through the streets to engage in the defence of the almost vanquished city. The "Child of Destiny" himself was beheld amidst his soldiers, who, far from discovering fatigue, demanded with loud cries to be led into immediate battle. Napoleon halted to reassure the King of Saxony, who was apprehensive of the destruction of his capital ; while his troops marching through the city drew up on the western side at those avenues which were threatened by the enemy. Two sallies were made under Napoleon's eye by Ney and Mortier, the one directed against the left flank of the Allies, the other on their right. The Prussians were dislodged from a hollow space, which covered their advance towards the ramparts ; and the war began already to wear a new aspect, the assailants retiring from the points they had before so fiercely attacked. The sentinels of the two armies remained, however, close upon each other during the night. On the 27th the battle was renewed amidst torrents of rain and a tempest of wind. Napoleon, manoeuvring with the excellence peculiar to himself, made his troops, now increased to two hundred thousand men, file out from the city in different directions, like rays from a centre, and then turned them upon such point as seemed most assailable along the enemy's whole line, which occupied the heights from Plauen to Strehlen. In this manner, aided by the stormy weather which served to conceal his movements, he commenced his attack upon both flanks of the enemy. On the left, he took advantage of a large interval left for the division of Klenau, who were in the act of coming up ; but whose

troops were too much exhausted to form in line. A heavy cannonade was kept up on both sides. One of the batteries of the young guard having slackened its fire, and it being given as a reason that the balls did not tell from the guns being placed too low, Napoleon made answer, "Fire on nevertheless: it is necessary to occupy the attention of the enemy on that point."

At this period of the battle, Buonaparte observing a group of persons on horseback at some distance from him, and concluding they were endeavouring to guess at his movements, resolved to disturb them, and called to a captain of artillery to throw a dozen bullets into that group, which might contain some of the enemy's generals. One of the balls struck Moreau, and carried off both his legs. A moment before, Alexander had been speaking to him. A bustle took place among the troops as if some person of consequence had fallen, and Buonaparte having been led to suppose it was Schwartzenberg, remarked with an air of complacency, "It was to him then that the fatal omen of the fire pointed!" Moreau's legs were amputated, not far from the spot. A peasant brought one of the feet with the boot upon it to the King of Saxony, as that of some officer of great distinction who had been struck down by a cannon-ball. But it was not known till the next morning who it was; when a Russian officer told the Emperor that it was General Moreau, to the surprise and mortification of Daru who was with him, and who had hitherto contended that Napoleon had taken up a groundless prejudice against that general. I am not sorry that the blow which extinguished his life was aimed by him whose glory he had thought to dim by envy, and by oppressing the last struggles of a cause whose early triumphs had lent his name a passport to immortality. He who barteres his fair fame for the smile of greatness should have his memory pursued with lasting scorn.

The death of Moreau, on whose judgment and

reputation great reliance had been placed, is supposed to have had a share in disconcerting the operations of the allies. Another circumstance of more importance was the presence of Napoleon, which was unexpected. Jomini, another deserter from the French ranks, proposed to redeem the fortune of the day by changing the whole front of the army ; but this scheme was thought too daring, so that retreat was resolved upon. Murat had however thrown himself into the eastern road to Bohemia by Freyberg, and Vandamme blocked up that which led directly up the Elbe by Pirna. The cross-roads therefore only lay open to Schwartzenberg and his army ; and these having been rendered almost impassable by the weather, his retreat was disastrous enough. He lost fourteen or fifteen thousand men, who were taken prisoners, and a great number of cannon.

Having seen this triumphant day to a close, Napoleon returned to Dresden on horseback, his grey-coat and slouched hat streaming with water : but having eaten of some food which was suspected to be poisoned, in addition to his exposure to the weather and continued fatigue for three days, the next day he suffered a severe attack of illness, and was prevented from following up the pursuit in person as he had intended, which led to a series of fresh disasters, and gave a turn to affairs. On the 29th, the King of Naples, Marmont, and St. Cyr were each employed in pressing hard on the columns of the Allies. A corps of about thirty thousand men had been entrusted to Vandamme, of which Buonaparte had such confident expectations, that when complimented on the victory of Dresden, he replied, while his countenance beamed with satisfaction—"Oh! this is nothing, Vandamme is on their rear—it is there we must look for the great result!" This general had advanced as far as Peterswald, a small town in the Bohemian mountains, driving before him a column of Russians commanded by Ostermann, who were retreating upon Toplitz. This latter town

was the point on which all the scattered and fugitive troops of the Allies were directing their course. If Vandamme could have defeated Ostermann and carried this place, he might have established himself (with his corps of thirty thousand men) on the only road practicable for artillery, by which the Allies could reach Prague ; so that they must either have remained cooped up between his *corps d' armes* and those of the other French generals in their rear ; or, abandoning their guns and baggage, have dispersed and endeavoured to escape across the mountains by tracks known only to goatherds and peasants. It was a true *trou de rat* ; and the only pity is that it failed.

It was on the morning of the 29th that, acting under so strong a temptation as that just mentioned, Vandamme descended the hill from Peterswald to the village of Culm, which is situated in a valley between that town and Toplitz. His plan, with all its untold consequences, seemed to promise every success. Already he grasped his prize in his hand. This single *coup-de-main*, if accomplished, would complete the disorganisation of the Allied Army. The French advanced-guard had got within half a league of Toplitz, when, on a sudden, Count Ostermann, who had hitherto retreated slowly, halted, and commenced a most obstinate resistance. His troops stood to be hewed in pieces, while Vandamme led down corps after corps to renew the attack, till all his force was collected in the valley between Culm and Toplitz. Ostermann lost an arm in the action, the grenadiers of the Russian guard also suffered severely ; but he had gained the necessary time. Barclay de Tolly came up with succours ; Schwartzenberg sent others ; and Vandamme, in turn overpowered by numbers, retired to Culm as night closed. In prudence he should have regained the heights of Peterswald before he halted ; or perhaps he expected to be joined by other columns before morning. In the mean time, Barclay and Schwartzenberg had collected more of their followers ;

and at break of day, renewed the attack on the French with a superiority of force, with which it was in vain to contend. Vandamme therefore prepared to return towards the heights of Peterswald, from which he had descended. But, at this moment, by a chance of war, the corps of the Prussian General Kleist, who had evaded the pursuit of St. Cyr by throwing themselves into the neighbouring wood, issued out of it, and appeared at the top of the very ridge which Vandamme was climbing. When the Prussians came in sight of the French, they conceived they were placed there for the purpose of cutting them off; and the latter coming to the same conclusion with regard to them, each party being bent on making its way through that opposed to it, the one rushed down the hill, while the other proceeded up it with equal impetuosity and fury, and met half-way with a shock, the confusion and violence of which raged for some minutes, when the Russians, who were in pursuit of Vandamme, appearing in the rear, put an end to this singular rencontre. Generals Vandamme, Haxo, and Guyon were made prisoners, with two eagles and seven thousand men, besides a great loss in killed and wounded.

The effect of this piece of chance medley was important, and even fatal. The Allies regained all their confidence and spirits, while the French generals were disheartened and afraid of repeating Vandamme's blunder. The advantages of the battle of Dresden were no longer followed up as they might have been. Murat halted at Sayda, Marmont at Zinwalde, and St. Cyr at Liebenau. The headquarters of the Emperor Alexander remained at Töplitz. Napoleon received the news of this calamity, however unexpected, and mortifying, with the undisturbed calmness which was one of his distinguishing characteristics. General Corbineau, who commanded in the desperate charge of cavalry up the hill of Peterswald, presented himself before the Emperor in the plight in which he had escaped

from the field, covered with his own blood and that of the enemy, and holding in his hand a Prussian sabre, for which, in the thick of the scuffle, he had exchanged his own. Napoleon listened attentively to the details he had to give. He then anxiously turned to the instructions to Vandamme, to see if anything had inadvertently slipped in to countenance the false step which that general had taken. But nothing was found to justify or encourage his advancing beyond Peterswald, though the desire of possessing himself of Toplitz might furnish his excuse. "This is the fate of war," said the Emperor, turning to Murat. "Exalted in the morning, low enough before night. There is but a step between triumph and ruin?" He then fixed his eyes on the map which lay before him, took up his compasses, and repeated, in a sort of reverie, some verses bearing an application to his past and present fortunes.\*

\* "J'ai servi, commandé, vaincu quarante années ;  
Du monde entre mes mains j'ai vu les destinées :  
Et j'ai toujours connu qu'en chaque événement  
Le destin des états dépendait d'un moment."

## CHAPTER L.

## THE BATTLE OF LEIPSIC.

Disasters of the French in the north of Germany ; desertion of the Bavarians ; battle of Leipsic ; Napoleon demands an armistice ; Leipsic evacuated by the French ; Napoleon arrives in Paris.

AFFAIRS were going on no better in the north than they were in the south. Indeed wherever Buonaparte was not present to make amends by his unwearied activity and the superiority of his genius for the deficiency of numbers and other disadvantages, the result could hardly be otherwise. On setting out on his return to Dresden (August the 23rd), he left orders for Oudinot to march upon Berlin, and for Macdonald to attack Blucher at Breslau. Both enterprises failed. Oudinot came up with the crown-prince of Sweden at the village of Gros-Beeren near Potsdam, and was defeated by him and Bulow in conjunction, after a spirited resistance made by Regnier, and with the loss of fifteen hundred men and eight guns. General Girard, also, had sallied from Magdeburg with five or six thousand men, in consequence of the removal of the blockading force to join the crown-prince against Oudinot ; but after the action of Gros-Beeren, meeting the Prussian brigade returning, an action ensued, to which Czernicheff, who came up with his Cossacks, put a very unpleasant termination. Macdonald was not more successful ; for going in pursuit of Blucher, who thought the absence of Napoleon at Dresden a good opportunity to seek the enemy, they met half-way on the road to Jauer, before Macdonald was pre-

pared ; his right wing under Lauriston, and his left under Souham, with Sebastiani's cavalry, being at some distance from him. The latter hastening to his assistance, and taking by mistake the same route, five thousand horse and twenty-five thousand foot got entangled in the narrow village of Kroitch ; and Macdonald, unable to stand his ground alone, was defeated before they could come up to save him. Lauriston was fiercely engaged by the Russian general Tauenstein ; and his retreat cut off. The French in these several actions are allowed to have lost fifteen thousand men ; and the army destined to act against Silesia was thus completely disabled.

Buonaparte endeavoured to repair these evils by appointing Ney to succeed Oudinot, with strict injunctions to plant his eagles on the walls of Berlin. Ney, accordingly, on the 4th of September took charge of the army which lay round Wittenberg, and advanced towards the Prussian capital with a view to execute the Emperor's orders. The troops of the crown-prince lay to the left ; and the marshal's object was to avoid any encounter with the enemy, throw himself on the road from Torgau to Berlin, and enter into communication with reinforcements from Dresden. But it was found necessary to pass by Dennewitz, where Tauenstein was stationed, and who might give the alarm to the other corps of the enemy. On the morning of the 6th, therefore, Bertrand was sent forward to attack Tauenstein and draw off his attention, while Ney with the rest of the army pushed rapidly by without being brought to action. But Bertrand having made his appearance too early, notice was given to the allied troops in the neighbourhood ; and before Ney arrived, they were ready to dispute the passage with him. The engagement consequently became general ; and Ney who had had enough on his hands with the Prussians, though the French artillery made dreadful havoc among them, despaired of success when the Swedes and Russians

appeared in the field against him. But no sooner had he begun his retreat than this served as a signal of flight to the 7th corps, composed chiefly of Saxons ; and the cavalry of the allies rushing into the gap made by their sudden disappearance, the army of Ney was cut into two parts, one of which with Oudinot reached Scharnitz ; the marshal himself making good his retreat upon Torgau, but with the loss of ten thousand men, forty-three pieces of cannon, and the disappointment of the object of his march upon Berlin.

The allies seemed to avoid Buonaparte himself, as they would avoid the Devil. Having dispatched Ney against the crown-prince on the 4th of September, he set out himself in hopes of meeting with Blucher, whose Cossacks had been committing depredations in the neighbourhood of Bautzen ; but that wary adventurer knew better than to trust to an encounter. As soon as Napoleon had turned his back on that city, Wittgenstein threatened Dresden ; and the French Emperor, recalled to the Elbe by this circumstance and by the news of the battle of Dennewitz, came in sight of the Russian general on the 9th. But the allies, afraid of one of those sudden flashes of inspiration, when Napoleon seemed to dictate terms to fortune, had enjoined Wittgenstein to fall back in his turn. The passes of the Erzebirge received him ; and Buonaparte following him as far as Peterswald, gazed on the spot where Vandamme had met his unaccountable defeat, and looked across the valley to Toplitz where Alexander still had his head-quarters ; but proceeded no farther. He returned to Dresden on the 12th, having taken a son of Blucher prisoner in a skirmish on the road ; but was soon called back to the Bohemian mountains to the relief of Lobau, who was attacked near Gieshubel by a detachment of Schwartzenberg's army. In his absence he found that the prince-royal was preparing to cross the Elbe, and that Bulow had opened trenches

before Wittenburg, while Blucher approached the right bank of that river, insulting his lieutenants and retiring from himself, as was the case again at Hartha on the 21st of September. Napoleon in these circumstances could neither remain at Dresden without suffering the crown-prince and Blucher to enter Saxony, nor make any distant movement against those generals, without endangering the safety of Dresden, and with it his line of communication with France. The last, as the greater evil of the two, he resolved to guard against as much as possible, by fixing himself at Dresden, which he reached on the 24th. His marshals had orders to draw nearer to this central point, and the right or east side of the Elbe was abandoned to the allies. He directed Augereau, who commanded about sixteen thousand men in the neighbourhood of Wurtzburg, to join him at Dresden. The Bavarian troops, upon whom Augereau had been a check, deserted not long after. The allies on their side had just now received their last reinforcement of 60,000 Russians under Bennigsen. The most of them came from the eastward of Moscow; and among them were to be seen tribes of wandering Baskirs and Tartars, figures unknown to European war, wearing sheep-skins, and armed with bows and arrows; men brought from the very wall of China, to show the narrow range of despotic sway, and stop the overwhelming tide of modern civilization.

The allies having now collected their utmost strength, and being in numbers greatly superior to the adversary, determined to execute a joint movement, so as to transfer their forces to the left bank of the Elbe; and should Buonaparte persist in remaining at Dresden, to cut him off from his communications with the Rhine. On the 3rd of October, Blucher crossed the Elbe; and driving Bertrand before him, fixed his head-quarters at Duben. The crown-prince crossed at Rosslau; and thus both the great armies

passed over to the other side, leaving the right bank clear, with the exception of the division of Tauenstein, which still lay before Wittenberg. Ney retired before this unequal force to Leipsic, and Schwartzenberg advanced from the south as far as Marienberg. It was at this period, and in this critical position, that the Emperor received a confidential letter from the King of Bavaria, assuring him that he would hold out six weeks longer against all the allurements that were offered him to desert his cause. On this, Buonaparte finding one grand stroke necessary, both to baffle his enemies and secure the wavering fidelity of his allies, conceived and proposed to his council one of the boldest schemes he had ever thought of or executed. The allies, by concentrating themselves on the left bank of the Elbe, had left the right side defenceless, with the exception of the inconsiderable force of Tauenstein at Wittenberg. This circumstance did not escape the falcon glance of Napoleon. He proposed, therefore, to change positions with the enemy; to occupy the right bank of the Elbe which they had quitted, resting his extreme left on Dresden and his right on Hamburg; to recover the cities of Berlin, Brandenburg, and Mechlenburg; to deblockade the great garrisons, and add their troops to the main army, and carrying on the war between the Elbe and the Oder from the resources of a country yet untouched, and in his turn becoming the assailant, instead of acting on the defensive, to dazzle and overpower the allies no less by the daring novelty of his enterprise, than by the addition of solid strength it would afford him. He had already ordered Regnier and Bertrand to cross the Elbe in furtherance of his meditated plan. But the coldness of his marshals, who seem to have thought from this time that there was no safety but in fear, and the defection of the Bavarian troops, of which he was informed by the King of Wirtemberg, put an end to his scheme, and he gave it up, though not without a struggle. He

balanced for three days between advance and retreat. At length, he resolved upon retiring to Leipsic ; and the orders to Regnier and Bertrand to proceed towards Berlin were recalled. No time was to be lost, and he was obliged to leave Davoust behind him in garrison at Hamburg, Lemarroijs at Magdeburg, Lapoype at Wittenberg, and Narbonne at Torgau. Still he did not despair of some favourable chance which might again bring him back to the line of the Elbe. "A thunderbolt," he said, "alone could save him ; but all was not lost while a battle was in his power, and a single victory might restore Germany to his allegiance." *Diis aliter visum!*

Leaving Duben, whither he had gone on the traces of Blucher, who retreated across the Mulda to join the crown-prince, the Emperor reached Leipsic early on the 15th of October ; and received the welcome news that his whole force would in twenty-four hours be under its walls : that the grand army of Austria was fast approaching, but Blucher alarmed by the demonstrations against Berlin, would be longer in coming up, so that there might be an opportunity of fighting one army before the arrival of the other. There had already been a skirmish of cavalry, in which Murat had narrowly escaped from a young Prussian officer who was cut down by an orderly dragoon of the king's. The Prussians, it is said, when complimented on their behaviour, replied—" Could we do otherwise ? It was the anniversary of the battle of Jena." It is not a rule in war that the party that is vanquished one time conquers the next. But any thing will serve for the folly of pseudo-patriotism.—The town of Leipsic has four sides and four gates. On the north those of Halle and Ranstadt, on the east the gate of Grimma, and on the south that called St. Peter's, lead out of the city into extensive suburbs. To the west are two rivers, the Pleisse and the Elster, which flowing through marshy grounds, are only passable by a succession of bridges, the first of them

leading to the villages of Lindenau and Mark-Ranstadt, and commencing close to the city-gate of that name. This road forms the only communication between Leipsic and the banks of the Rhine. On the east, the river Partha makes a large semicircular bend, enclosing an extensive plain: on the south is the rising ground called the Swedish camp, and another called the Sheep-walk, bordering on the banks of the Pleisse. To this quarter the grand army of the allies was seen advancing on the 15th of October. Buonaparte made his arrangements accordingly. Bertrand and Poniatowski defended Lindenau and the east side of the city, by which the French must retreat. Augereau was posted farther to the left, on the elevated plain of Wachau; and on the south, Victor, Lauriston, and Macdonald confronted the advance of the allies with the imperial guards placed as a reserve. On the north, Marmont was placed between Moeckern and Euterist, to make head against Blucher, should he arrive in time to take part in the battle. On the opposite quarter, the sentinels of the two armies were within musket-shot of each other when evening fell. But neither side seemed willing to begin a strife which was to decide the great, the only question—Whether the princes of Europe should be put in a situation to dictate laws and a government to France, or fail (as they had so often and so justly hitherto done) incurring the penalty which they madly and wickedly thought this object was worth, not only of disgrace and discomfiture, but of their own and their people's subjugation?

The number of men who engaged the next morning was estimated at one hundred and thirty-six thousand French, and two hundred and thirty thousand on the part of the allies. All the accounts assign a preponderating force to the latter of eighty or one hundred thousand men. Napoleon himself visited all the posts, gave his last orders, and took occasion, as he frequently did on the eve of a battle, to distribute eagles

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to the new raised regiments. The soldiers were made to swear never to abandon them : and the Emperor concluded by saying aloud, " Yonder lies the enemy : swear that you will rather die than permit France to be dishonoured." And they so swore, and they did and would to the last have kept their word, in spite of the superiority of numbers, but for the treachery of their confederates, who thought to set themselves free, when indeed they became most slaves ! The greatest preparations for defence were made on the southern side of Leipsic, as the attack on the north was less certain. Rockets were, however, seen ascending in the night, which were supposed to be signals of the approach of Blucher and the crown prince. Napoleon remained all night in the rear of his own guards, behind the central position, facing a village called Gossa, occupied by the Austrians. At daybreak on the 16th of October the battle began. The French position was assailed along all the southern front with the greatest fury. On the French right, the village of Markleberg was fiercely assaulted by Kleist, while the Austrian division of Mehrfeldt making their way through the marshes, compelled Poniatowski to give ground, till the Emperor made Marmont send Souham, who had joined during the night, to his assistance. Marshal Victor defended the village of Wachau against Prince Eugene of Wirtemberg. Lauriston repulsed Klenau. The allies having made six desperate attempts on these points, all of them unsuccessful, Napoleon in turn assumed the offensive. Macdonald was ordered to attack Klenau and beat him back from Liebertwolkowitz with the cavalry of Sebastiani ; while two divisions proceeded to sustain General Lauriston. This was about noon. The village of Gossa was carried by the bayonet. Macdonald made himself master of the Swedish camp ; and the eminence called the Sheep-walk was near being taken in the same manner. The impetuosity of the French had fairly broken through the centre of the allies, and

Napoleon sent the tidings of his success to the King of Saxony, who ordered all the bells in the city to be rung, the peal of which mingled with the roar of the cannon. The King of Naples, with Latour-Maubourg and Kellermann, poured through the gap in the enemy's centre at the head of the whole body of cavalry, and thundered forward as far as Magdeburg, a village in the rear of the allies, bearing down General Rayefskoi with the grenadiers of the Russian reserve. At this moment, while the French were disordered by their own success, Alexander, who was present, ordered forward the Cossacks of his guard, who with their long lances bore back the dense body of cavalry that had so nearly carried the day. Meantime, as had been apprehended, Blucher arrived before the city, and suddenly came into action with Marmont, being three times his numbers. He in consequence obtained great and decided advantages; and before nightfall had taken the village of Mœckern, together with twenty pieces of artillery and two thousand prisoners. But on the south side the contest continued doubtful. Gossa was still disputed. The Austrians of Bianchi's division came on with dreadful outcries: Poniatowski, even with Augereau's aid, had great difficulty in keeping his ground: but Schwartzenberg having pushed a body of horse across the Pleisse to take the French in rear, they were instantly charged and driven back by General Jewel of the guards, and their leader, General Mehrfeldt, fell into the hands of the French. The battle raged till nightfall, when it ceased by mutual consent. Three cannon-shot fired as a signal to the more distant points, intimated that the conflict was ended for the time, and the armies slept on the ground they had occupied during the day. The French on the southern side had not relinquished one foot of their original position, though attacked by such superior numbers. Marmont had indeed been forced back by Blucher, and compelled to crowd his line of defence nearer the walls of Leipsic.

Thus pressed on all sides with doubtful issues, Buonaparte availed himself of the capture of General Mehrfeldt to demand an armistice, and to signify his acceptance of the terms proposed by the allies, but which were now found to be too moderate ; as all terms would prove to be, that either were or had a chance of being accepted, because there was an ulterior nameless object that drew them on, and from which nothing but despair could wean them. They offered Buonaparte terms which only absolute necessity could make him submit to ; and when that necessity came, they said, " No, we will have more, namely, the original stake we played for ; unconditional surrender of the right of nations to choose their own government." Buonaparte thought he could make choice of Count Mehrfeldt as the bearer of a pacific overture with the better grace and more confidence, because, after the battle of Austerlitz, it was the same individual who, on the part of the Emperor of Austria, had solicited and obtained a personal interview and favourable terms from Napoleon. " Adieu, General Mehrfeldt," said the Emperor, dismissing his prisoner : " when, on my part, you mention the word *armistice* to the two Emperors, I doubt not that the voice which then strikes their ears will awaken many recollections." Many recollections, indeed, " deep scars which thunder had entrenched," and which required to have all traces of them wiped out by an erasure as complete as it was un hoped for ! Woe to him who shows and then expects favour from princes ! Napoleon received no answer till his troops had recrossed the Rhine ; and the reason assigned is, that the allies had pledged themselves solemnly to each other to enter into no treaty with him " while a single individual of the French army remained in Germany ;" when, there being no fear left for the sacredness of their own soil, they might proceed to violate that of France with impudence and with impunity, nor leave it till they had

branded it with the image and superscription of an inborn slavery.

The 17th was spent in preparations on both sides, without any actual hostilities. At eight o'clock on the morning of the 18th, they were renewed with tenfold fury. Napoleon had considerably contracted his circuit of defence, and the French were posted on an inner line, nearer to Leipsic, of which Probsheyda was the central point. He himself, stationed on an eminence called Thonberg, commanded a prospect of the whole field. The troops were drawn up behind the villages; cannon were planted in front and on their flanks, and every patch of wooded ground, which afforded the least shelter, was filled with riflemen. The battle then joined issue. The Poles, with the gallant Poniatowski at their head, to whom this was to be the last of his fields of battle, defended the banks of the Pleisse and the adjoining villages against the Prince of Hesse-Homberg, Bianchi, and Colleredo. In the centre, Barclay, Wittgenstein, and Kleist advanced on Probsheyda, where they were opposed by Murat, Victor, Augereau, and Lauriston, under the eye of Napoleon himself. On the left Macdonald had drawn back his division to a village called Stoetteritz. Along this whole line the contest was maintained furiously on both sides; nor could the terrified spectators, from the walls and steeples of Leipsic, perceive that it either receded or advanced. About two o'clock the allies forced their way headlong into Probsheyda; the camp-followers began to fly; the tumult was excessive. Napoleon, in the rear but yet on the verge of this tumult, preserved his entire tranquillity. He placed the reserve of the old guard in order, led them in person to recover the village, and saw them force their entrance, ere he withdrew to the eminence from whence he watched the battle. During the whole of this eventful day, this wonderful man continued calm, decided, collected; and sup-

ported his diminished and broken squadrons with a presence of mind and a courage as determined as he had ever shown in directing the tide of onward victory. Perhaps his military talents were even more to be admired, when thus contending against Fortune and superior numbers, than when the fickle goddess, with her countless followers, fought by his side. The allies, at length, felt themselves obliged to desist from the murderous attacks on the villages which cost them so dear ; and, withdrawing their troops, kept up a dreadful fire with their artillery. The French replied with equal spirit, though they had fewer guns ; and besides, their ammunition was falling short. Still, however, Napoleon completely maintained the day on the south of Leipsic, where he commanded in person. On the northern side, the yet greater superiority of numbers placed Ney in a precarious situation ; and, pressed hard both by Blucher and the crown-prince, he was compelled to draw nearer the town, and had made a stand on an eminence called Heiterblick, when on a sudden the Saxons, who were stationed in that part of the field, deserted from the French and went over to the enemy. In consequence of this unexpected disaster, Ney was unable any longer to defend himself. It was in vain that Buonaparte dispatched his reserves of cavalry to fill up the chasm that had been made ; and Ney drew up the remainder of his forces close under the walls of Leipsic. The battle once more ceased at all points ; and the same signal having been given as before, the field was left to the slain and the wounded.

Although the French army had thus kept its ground up to the last moment on these two days, yet there was no prospect of their being able to hold out much longer at Leipsic. The allies pressed with an enormous force on the city : the ammunition of the French was nearly exhausted : a corps, which it was hoped might join from Dresden, had not come up ; besides which, Buonaparte had just learned that the Bava-

rians had gone over to the allies and meant to intercept his return to France. All things counselled a retreat, which was destined (like the rest of late) to be unfortunate: for when disasters once begin, the hurry and perplexity of mind they create multiplies them. The retreat was commenced in the night-time; and Napoleon spent a third harassing night in giving the necessary orders for march. He appointed Macdonald and Poniatowski (with whom he parted for the last time) to defend the rear. With daylight the allied troops strove to pour into Leipsic in pursuit of the retiring army. The King of Saxony sent proposals to the allies not to enter the city till the French had evacuated it; and Napoleon was advised to set fire to the suburbs to protect his rear-guard; but this he refused to do, out of regard to his old and faithful ally. He took a friendly leave of the monarch and his queen, but their interview was broken off by the near discharge of musketry around them. They urged him to mount his horse and escape; but, before he did so, he formally released the king's body-guard from all ties to himself and France. He parted only just in time; for the streets were so choked up with the troops, baggage, and artillery, the wounded and the dead, that he found it was impossible to make his way through them, and was obliged to turn down the bye-streets, and, leaving the city through a different gate, gained the bridge of Ranstadt by a circuitous route.

A temporary bridge which had been erected had given way, and the old bridge on the road to Lindenau was the only one that remained for the passage of the whole French army. But the defence of the suburbs had been so gallant and obstinate, that time was allowed for this purpose. At length the rear-guard itself was about to retreat, when, as they approached the banks of the river, the bridge blew up by the mistake of a serjeant of a company of sappers, who in the absence of his principal, hearing

the shouts of the Cossacks and seeing the confusion that prevailed, imagined the retreat of the French cut off, and set fire to the mine of which he had the charge before the proper moment. This catastrophe effectually barred the escape of all those who still remained on the Leipsic side of the river, except a few who succeeded in swimming across, among whom was Marshal Macdonald. Poniatowski, after making a brave resistance, and refusing to surrender, was drowned in making the same attempt. In him, it might be said, perished the last of the Poles. About twenty-five thousand French were made prisoners of war, with a great quantity of artillery and baggage. The triumph of the allied monarchs was complete : they had once more made mankind their footstool. They met in the great square, together with that "base foot-ball player," the Crown Prince of Sweden, to congratulate each other on the event ; and to receive his sword from General Bertrand as commandant of the city. No interview took place with the King of Saxony, who was sent (as a recreant to the cause of thrones) under a guard of Cossacks to Berlin. The bridge which had been destroyed was as necessary to the advance of the allies as it had been to the retreat of Napoleon, and the pursuit was but slack. However, according to the writers on that side of the question, the great point had been gained, and the liberation of Germany was effected. If so, the contest was at an end, according to the professed objects of the war. But it was only then that the old, the secret, and unalterable ones came into play. "*Their cause was hearted.*" The less formidable Buonaparte became, the more were his enemies bent on his destruction ; for the superstructure of power being gone, they came in sight of the foundation—Freedom—a thousand times more hateful to them ; and all marks of which they had vowed, with curses and in frantic orgies, to root from the earth !

Meantime, he himself continued his retrograde

steps to Lutzen, and thence to Erfurt, which he reached on the 23rd of October. The troops, it is said, soured by misfortune, marched with a fierce and menacing air, but his own courage was unabated ; he seemed thoughtful, but calm and composed ; indulging in no vain regrets, still less useless censures and recrimination. At Erfurt he counted his losses, which were greater than he expected : heard of new defections among his allies, and parted, for the last time, with Murat, who, under pretence of bringing up forces from the French frontiers, hastily set off for his own dominions. The Poles who were in Buonaparte's army showed a spirit worthy of a people wishing to be free, but therefore (as it should seem) not trusted with freedom. The Emperor gave them their option whether they would adhere to his broken fortunes, or forsake him at this crisis when it might be of advantage to themselves ; but they to a man refused to avail themselves of the alternative. He passed two days at Erfurt, where his reassembled force amounted to about eighty thousand men. These, with eighty thousand more which had been left behind in the garrisons, were all that remained of two hundred and eighty thousand at the commencement of the campaign. Instructions were sent to the commandants, after the battle of Leipsic, to evacuate the fortresses and form a junction with the Emperor ; but it is supposed they never received the orders. Most of them soon after capitulated, and the troops were to return to France, on condition of not serving for six months, but they were immediately made prisoners of war by a premeditated piece of treachery ; the difference of birth in the contracting parties being doubtless understood to cancel the obligations of justice or honour on one side ; and the boasted goodness of the cause of the allies making up for the barefaced want of good faith. St. Cyr thus lost thirty-five thousand men at Dresden ; and Rapp, nine thousand at Dantzic. After this, Hamburg, Magdeburg, Wittenberg, Custrin, and Glogau were the only places that held out at the end

of 1813. A pestilential fever raged in many of these garrisons, filled with the sufferers in the Russian campaign, which was sometimes communicated to the victors.

Buonaparte, while he was recruiting and collecting his forces, received news that his old ally, the Bavarian General Wrede, was waiting for him at Wurtzburg-on-the-Mayne, to intercept his way to France, and that the Austrians and Prussians were closing on his rear, in the direction of Weimar and Laugensalza. Urged by these circumstances, he left Erfurt on the 25th of October, in very boisterous weather. Wrede, notwithstanding the inferiority of his force, took up a position at Hanau, where he was joined by some Cossack chiefs. On the 30th the Bavarians occupied the wood of Lamboi, and were drawn up in a line on the right bank of a small river, the Kintzig, near Newhoff. A sharp skirmish took place in the wood, which was disputed, tree by tree, till Buonaparte ordered two battalions of the guard, under General Curial, to advance in support of the *tirailleurs*, when the Bavarians, at sight of their grenadier-caps, imagining themselves attacked by the whole corps, turned and fled. A successful charge of cavalry being at the same time made on Wrede's left, he found it necessary to retreat behind the Kintzig. The Bavarians kept possession of Hanau, but the high road to Frankfort passing on one side of the town, the necessary line of retreat was left open to Napoleon, who proceeded forward towards the Rhine, leaving three corps of infantry with Marmont to protect the rear-guard of eighteen thousand men under Mortier, which was not yet come up, but which made good their defence the next day against Wrede in a skirmish, in which he himself was wounded, and his son-in-law, the Prince of Altingen, killed on the spot. They then hastened to rejoin the Emperor. The French are reckoned to have lost six thousand men in these two actions, and the Bavarians ten thousand. A German miller is

said to have performed a signal service in the last day's battle, by turning the water into his mill-stream just in time to prevent a body of French cavalry from pursuing a body of Bavarian infantry, who were in danger of being cut to pieces by them. Buonaparte reached Frankfort on the 30th, which he left to other and to unhallowed guests on the 1st, and passing through Mentz, where he stopped for some days, arrived in Paris on the 9th of November.

His return, under these circumstances, raised a crowd of critics and murmurers, who, not to be deceived by a few banners, and an empty parade of four thousand Bavarian prisoners, asked very wisely, "Why they heard rumours of Russians, Austrians, Prussians on the east, and of English, Spanish, and Portuguese on the south, approaching the inviolable frontiers of the *Great Nation*?" It was the great nation itself who asked this, as if they had nothing to do with the title but the honour of receiving it, leaving the task of maintaining it to others. But the reason why they heard these rumours now was that they had heard them twenty years before and ever since, except as they were silenced or kept at a distance (which drew forth all their courage) by him, whose conduct they now questioned, and whose misfortunes they were ready to desert. The Russians did not ask why they heard the report of cannon on the banks of the Niemen : they only asked in their brutish instinct (better than reason that is merely the pander to foppery and cowardice) how they should repel the aggression (right or wrong) to the banks of the Seine : and it was not the tribute of admiration to Russian fortitude or German enthusiasm that would prevent these nations from over-running a country too elegant to defend itself in the moment of trial, except by professions of moderation, forbearance, and courtesy towards its enemies, when it could no longer trample upon them as it pleased. Was war a fine thing when the remote shout of victory served these polite talkers

and summer-patriots in silk-stockings and with *chapeaux-bras* for something to descant upon with their natural self-complacency ? But did it then become quite shocking and barbarous when it came nearer home, and might rouse them from their effeminate ease or cut short a vain-glorious harangue ? If it was ambition in Buonaparte, why did they suffer it ? If necessary self-defence against systematic and unjust aggression, why not uphold him in it now more than ever, when the triumph over them was likely to be carried into effect with added rancour and indelible ignominy ? Their way was not to stand still and compliment the sacrifices and exertions of foreigners, who had at last (as by a miracle, and from local accidents) rolled back the tide of war from themselves ; but to offer them the praise of men, and not of women, by emulating, if they did not mean to be wholly overwhelmed by them. Besides, even the late events showed that without their leader they could do nothing. Wherever he had not been present in the last campaign, the other French generals had been worsted. Where he had commanded in person, he had either obtained signal advantages, or stood his ground still more wonderfully against double his numbers—"frighting the souls of fearful adversaries"—with distrust, shame, and hate in his confederates. The French nation had only to stand by him to come off victorious ; or for the same reason, to sacrifice him to obtain peace with infamy. Let them defend him as long as he had defended them against their enemies, whom by so doing he had made his—and he and France would be *quits*, and leave the world their debtor while the world lasted !

The German troops when they came in sight of the Rhine ran forward and raised a shout of triumph and of filial piety at sight of this guardian stream ; but it does not appear that old Father Rhine frowned and murmured a hoarse warning to them never again to forfeit his protection by invading the independence

and insulting the liberty of other states—or that they minded him if he did. A whisper from Prince Metternich would have more power to send them on than the roar of all the waters of this parent flood to stop its valiant sons! The liberation of Germany was easily effected by hastily reinstating her petty princes in their former sovereignties ; for it is assuredly much easier to relapse into our old follies and vices than to alter for the better ; those who profit by the abuse of power or those who suffer by it being equally attached to it for some unaccountable reason or other. The same reverse of fortune followed everywhere. Prince Eugene was unable to defend Italy or the Illyrian provinces, after the defection of Bavaria opened the passes of the Tyrol to the Austrian troops, and the Croatians had mutinied in favour of their former masters. The seaport of Trieste was taken at the end of October ; and the English occupied Ferrara and Ravenna, as the pope in his newly-inspired love to heretics had wished them to do a few years before, which led to his involuntary trip to France. He was now conducted back with considerable pomp to Rome, amidst the rejoicings of the people, where he was re-installed in his authority (in concert with the Austrians) by that very same Murat, who had before hurried him with such indecent haste and alarming secrecy across the Alps. Ferdinand was about the same time ungraciously released from his confinement at Valençay ; and returned to his own kingdom in March, 1814, fettered by a sort of treaty which the Cortes annulled (as he soon after annulled the Cortes). It is wished by some politicians to close the account of Spanish affairs here, as if, after all the blood and treasure that have been wasted on this puppet, we ought not to know for what principles and for what persons we have thrown away our birthright and our boasted privilege “of giving out reformation to the world.” The Duke of Wellington after the battle of Vittoria took the fortresses of St. Sebastian and Pam-

peluna by storm, and hung upon the French frontier. Catalonia was the only part of Spain that remained in the power of the French, Suchet keeping possession of Barcelona. The rallying cry of Orange-Boven was once more heard at Amsterdam and the Hague ; and the liberation of Holland secured by the departure of the French commandant and the arrival of a Russian and an English force. Thus the tide of empire rolled back its refluent course ; and the restoration of the ancient landmarks of power and authority, the emerging of altars and of thrones from the modern deluge of anarchy and revolution that had confounded and swallowed up all “time-honoured” distinctions, was compared by Mr. Canning, in his place in Parliament, to the gradual re-appearance of mountain or promontory after the flood of old—a pretty figure of speech enough, but hardly worth repeating.

END OF VOL. III.















